Last Days of Premier Bhutto

LAST DAYS OF PREMIER BHUTTO

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CHAPTER 1

THAT HORRIFYING NIGHT

"Abbaji ……Abbajan!"

My son Rauf, affectionately called Roofi by the whole family was shaking me by the shoulder. He had barely called me the second time that I opened my eyes. His face seemed to be lined with worry. One look at his face and sleep fled from my mind and body. In a trice the fatigue of innumerable moments of constant wakefulness left me.

It was the night between the 4^{th} and 5^{th} of July 1977. I had returned home at about seven or seven – thirty in the evening after attending a Cabinet meeting at the Prime Minister's House. The political situation in the country had deteriorated to such an extent that today I can hardly recall any moment of rest or quietude in those days. Every hour that passed was only adding to the worsening chaos that had spread everywhere. Turmoil, strikes, processions and protest meetings - - it was a tidal wave of lawlessness and violence. All efforts to contain this relentless wave were proving futile. It appeared as if all that was happening was being directed by some inexorable law of nature, and that it was now beyond the power of any one of us to stop it.

The Cabinet meeting was truly important and had ended at about 7.30 P.M. many issues of vital national consequence had been discussed. The chief of the Army staff, General Zia – ul – Haq, had also participated in the meeting after which he had gone along with Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, to his room. Some of us Cabinet stood chatting outside the conference room. Suddenly the General emerged from Mr. Bhutto's room. He appeared to be in unusual hurry. Normally when the General shook hands with someone he would hold the other person's hand in his powerful grip and would not let go easily. But that day when I shook hands with him he could barely touch my fingers. His face was devoid of his familiar smile. I immediately sensed that something was afoot. As I stood there thinking what it could be, Mir Afzal called me,

"Aren't you coming?"

"yes, sure."

The two of us drove out of the Prime Minister's House in the same car. As I peeped through the window and saw them for the last time. Someone inside me

seemed to take up the refrain. “Time is up. After today, this ambience, this period, this epoch, all will come to an end. Bid your farewell to these things.

I don’t remember how the rest of the journey was passed. Mir Afzal dropped me at my place and drove off. He lived only a short distance away. When I entered my house my three sons, Tariq, Rauf and Rizwan were still up. My wife and daughter had gone to Saudi Arabia for Umra. I called the three of them into my room, and gave Tariq some necessary instructions; I also gave him my cheque book and told him how to run the domestic affairs in my absences. I am happy that my sons understood the instructions in the exact sense in which I gave them. They were neither unduly hesitant nor perturbed. They too were aware of the daily worsening state of affairs. I advised them that if, in my absence, they were required to vacate the present accommodation they should look for a new place, and if none was immediately available they should leave for Lahore.

During this period I received a telephone call from Raja Abdul Aziz Bhatti, MNA, from Rawalpindi. I repeated the same message to him, “Time is running out fast, the Army can take over any time; who knows whether even this night will pass off peacefully.”

After telling my children to go to bed. I rang up my personal physician and friend in Karachi, Dr. Ajmeri. He was coming over to see me.

“You’ve already delayed it, “I said to him, “may be you reach here tomorrow and will not be able to see us at all.”

That night I lay down in my bed at about 1.30 or 1.45 by that time my eyelids were already under the pressure of sleep. And now when I was awakened by Roofi’s voice it was about 2.45 a.m.

“What’s it, son? I asked, getting up from the bed, “is everything all right?”

“Abbajan, some people have climbed up the roof; they have guns in their hands.”

“Guns!”

I started to walk out of the room.

Yes! Please take your pistol along.”

He pulled out the pistol from under my pillow and handed it over to me.

At that moment I just could not figure out who the people could be who had climbed up my roof with guns.

Roofi's room faced the front. He saw two men climb the balcony with the help of the water pipe and then, after a few seconds, he saw two more climb up the same way. All four had guns in their hands.

Seeing this, Roofi ran towards my room, and woke me up.

I had now come out of my room with the gun in hand. I removed the curtain hanging over the door of the outer hall. In the light of the bulbs in the balcony I saw two soldiers close to the grill; their rifles aimed straight at me. My mind went straight back to the military coup of Bangladesh, which overthrew Sheikh Mujib – ur – Rehman. A spine – chilling wave ran through my body. It was a sort of feeling that could only be experienced by one who saw sure death confronting him.

My mind was in a whirl. In a few seconds hundreds of scenes rushed across my eyes; clear in my imagination was the dead body of Sheikh Mujib writhing in dust and blood with corpses of his family members littered around.

I felt that hell is about to be let loose. In an emotionless voice I addressed the two soldiers facing me. "Do you want to shoot or arrest?" I asked.

"Sir, we want to arrest you." One of them answered.

I felt relieved and opened the door.

"Can I change the cloths, or am I to go as I am?" I enquired.

"You can change," came the reply.

Meanwhile one major and four more soldiers had entered my room. Roofi was witnessing the whole scene, ruffled and astonished. I told him not to wake Tariq and Rizwan, and that he should also better go to bed.

I changed my cloths and then in order to inquire about the Prime Minister, I rang him up. First I picked up the green telephone, it was dead. I tried the others but those were also dead. The Captain seeing my plight informed me that all telephone lines had been disconnected, later I came to know that before coming to my residence the soldiers had occupied the telephone exchange. The operator there was dozing away. Suddenly he found himself surrounded by military jawans. He panicked thinking he had been caught sleeping during duty hours and that the military personnel would haul him up. In utter confusion he committed some stupidities. However a few whacks from the soldiers made him wide awake. Simultaneously they snapped the telephone wires.

The initial violence that I felt in their behavior was due to some unpleasant incidents that occurred at the residences of Hazeef Pirzada and Gen. Tikka Khan. Mumtaz Bhutto is extremely fond of keeping high pedigree dogs. In the whole of the Sindh he is renowned for owing some of the finest and fiercest dogs. At this house the military men had to face some difficulty. Due to that experience they naturally concluded that in my house too they will come across some similar situation. But when they found perfect peace at my place, their sullen tempers underwent a pleasant change. I asked them if I could take along a copy of the Holy Quran, a prayer carpet and few pairs of clothes. "You are not allowed to carry anything along," was the answer. "Has the army staged a coup?" I asked the Major.

"Sir, we are not allowed to answer any such questions", he said in a peculiar military tone.

As we were going downstairs I heard someone call out, "Bring me a pair of slippers." This was the voice of Hafeez Pirzada. I raised questioning eyes towards the Major.

"Take it ", he said.

I again went into my room, picked up a pair of slippers and came down. The whole compound full of uniformed soldiers. I gave the shoes to Hafeez Pirzada, who was in his sleeping trunks. He had accompanied the military men barefooted.

We were made to sit in separate jeeps.

As my jeep drove out of the main gate. I saw many soldiers in uniform posted around. They had a number of trucks and other vehicles with them for the Operation.

When this convey reached Zero Point and halted there, the time must have been around 3.15. It was quiet and dark all around. At the cross roads I saw some military jeeps.

"Why have we stopped her?" I asked the officer sitting beside me.

He told me that Mumtaz Bhutto would also be arriving there shortly. "When he comes, the convoy will move on." He said.

And then there ensued a long pause. After some time the silence of the night was broken by the roars of military vehicles; Mr. Mumtaz Bhutto had arrived. As soon as he joined us the convoy started moving. All around us a deep darkness prevailed barring a few street lights here the there.

As we pushed through the city we discovered that at every important crossing troops had been stationed.

Now we were passing through an area, which I did not find difficult to locate. That road led to Chaklala where I had my office as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. Finally all the military transports entered the large compound of an office that had been cordoned off by barbed wires. We were conducted into a room, which already had a fair size assembly. Retired Gen. Tikka khan, Mufti Mahmood, and Prof. Ghafoor were sitting on sofas and sipping tea. Now it was quite clear that the military had staged a coup but it was not yet known who was leading it, nor was anyone aware of the whereabouts of Mr. Bhutto.

Sitting together we were relating to each other the details of our arrest. Mumtaz Bhutto said, "When the vehicles stopped at Zero point I silently recited the 'Kalema Shahadat,' I thought they were going to shoot us in that deserted place, and our bodies would be buried in the surrounding fields. But when the convoy started moving again. I thought they were going to take us out of the urban locally and then put us before a firing squad because in the stillness of the night the sound of a gun shot has a loud effect which can disturb the sleep of private citizens." Mumtaz Bhutto's mordant wit aroused uproarious laughter in the room.

After some time each of us was assigned a room in the adjoining barracks.

The PNA leaders were lodged in the front barrack. These included Pir Sahib of Pagara, Asghar Kahn, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, Maulana Noorani, Mualana Mufti, Mahmud and Prof. Ghafoor. We i.e. myself, Mumtaz Bhutto, Hafeez Pirzada, Tikka Khan, Dr. Ghulam Hussain and Ghulam Mustafa Khan were give the opposite barrack.

By this time the hour of morning prayers was almost there. I went into my room, performed ablutions and prostrated myself before the Almighty. This was a prostration of thankfulness too, for we had undergone a military coup d'etat but one which was unlike most of those launched in other countries. There was no bloodshed, it was a peaceful one.

We came to know latter that the soldiers sent to arrest us were specially instructed to be courteous and respectful. They were permitted to fire only if fired upon, otherwise they were not to shed a single drop of blood nor were they supposed to carry out the operation in a way which could trigger off any public commotion.

After the prayers I went to bed. The recent events passed across my eyes like the frames of a movie. Soon I was sleeping soundly.

When I woke up the sun risen quite high. On the table lay breakfast in a tray.

This was the beginning of that long night of the Generals that started on the 5th of July 1977 and continued till 1st January 1986. The dawn is yet not visible and the intelligentsia is still humming a line of the couplet:

“This is not the dawn we had been longing for!”

All the same what took place between the night of 4th and 5th July, 1977 was never the starting point of a Martial Law - - its foundation had been laid much earlier. as a poet has said.” Time nourishes it for years: an accident does not occur all of a sudden.”

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CHAPTER 2

ELECTIONS ….. WHY BEFORE TIME ?

It was a chilly night of September 1974. The date was 15th. Having wound up his work for the day, Prime Minister Bhutto had detained Abdul Hafeez Pirzada, Rafi Raza and my self for dinner at his official residence. As usual his plate had only a small quantity of roasted mincemeat.

Staring at us with an expressionless face he posed a question.

What benefit has accrued to the government from the way the thanks giving days has been celebrated?"

He was referring to the Constitutional Amendment regarding the Ahmadis, which has prompted country wide celebrations. Mr. Bhutto felt that the credit which should have gone to his government had not been accorded. "The maulvis are claiming all credit for the Amendment," he complained, "we must portray the true picture before the people."

"People know the exact reality, sir, "Hafeez Pirzada said in his usual haughty manner, "how many members do the Mullahs have in the assembly? The masses know their true worth; they will not accept their bogus accorded full credit."

"What is your opinion Maulana?"

Prime Minister Bhutto looked at me with half open eyes and a subdued smile. Whenever in a light mood he would adopt this peculiar style - - just for fun's sake - - while talking to his close associates. On such occasions he allowed full liberty to those with divergent opinions to express themselves. However, he did interject here and there to liven up the conversation. It usually helped. But at time it so happened that instead of the conversation being enlivened - - almost carried away: On such occasions the Prime Minister particularly enjoyed the gestures and utterance of our friend Khurshid Hassan Mir.

Some people, otherwise quite intelligent and sharp witted, are dull so far as the sense of humor is concerned. A statement made just for the sake of fun is taken so seriously by them that they start indulging in a philosophical discourse lending weight to it by painful contortions of their face.

Such were the types who were the source of untold amusement for Mr. Bhutto. "Many a times I have given J. A. Rahim quite meaningless and out of the

place topic, “ he once said to me, “and kept listening to his long and tiring speech with all seriousness!”

Now that he had asked me about my opinion, he was not thinking only about the credit for the Constitutional Amendment; the real point appeared to be something different.

Assessing his thoughts I started to speak carefully. “It is true the ulema are trying to get the credit for it, because they have been waging this crusade since long, and made sacrifices as well. However, the final decision has been taken by your government. But presently, so far as I understand, you are thinking from the point of view of the elections.”

I paused for a few seconds, and watched the expression on his face.

He nodded in the affirmative, and looked at Pirzada. At the same time he gestured to me to go ahead.

“This step has certainly enhanced your popularity in the religious circles, “I continued, but these circles do not have much significance from the elections point of view; it’s the majority that matter in a political decision. In context of the present political situation your graph is lower than what it was in 1973.”

At this point I referred to a talk I had with him earlier.

One night, during the Islamic Summit in Lahore, we were sitting very tired, sipping coffee. All of a sudden Mr. Bhutto asked me a question. “Maulana “he said, “what do you think will be my first act after seeing off the honorable guest”? “I don’t claim to predict your mind,”I said, “but I think since the problem of funds has been settled, you are now free to fulfill your cherished dream.” Yes! That will be done later,” said Mr. Bhutto, “but the first thing I will do is to dissolve the Assembles and hold elections within sixty days.”

“This is the best moment,” I replied without any hesitance.

I was in full agreement with him at that time and to this day stick to that opinion. The P. M.’s decision was undoubtedly sagacious.

After the debacle of East Pakistan, although Mr. Bhutto had succeeded in forming a government in the remaining part of Pakistan by virtue of being the majority leader, and also used to give argument in defense of his step, yet in some remote corner of his mind the feeling persisted that since those elections were for the Constituent Assembly of the whole of Pakistan it was necessary to seek a fresh mandate from the people after the geographical changes of 1971. That is what he had not been able to do till then.

Immediately after assuming power he had been constantly thinking of fresh elections but the national and international conditions kept coming in his way. Major problems that confronted him were the repatriation of 90 thousand P.O.W.'s and erasing the effects of the military defeat. To this end he signed the Simla Agreement and soon after got busy with preparations for the Islamic Summit.

Unity of the Muslim world was a dream that we both shared, and the maximum efforts to convert it into a reality had been put in by two of us. Among the Ministers at the time, excluding Mr. Bhutto, if any one was a little known in the Islamic world, it was my humble self. Therefore if any one apart from the two of us, had even wanted to, he could not have played an effective role. Besides the wide, universal, regional and international objectives of this conference, we also had two other objectives in our mind. The first was the holding of fresh elections and the other, recognition of Bangladesh.

The decision about the recognition of Bangladesh and the participation of Sheikh Mujib in the Islamic Conference had already been taken but it was a secret not known even to many of the Cabinet Ministers. In a function at Lahore the portraits of all the participating Heads of the Islamic States had been prepared but was kept away in my custody. It was to be displayed after the announcement of his arrival.

The conference was a great success, much beyond any expectations. At my suggestion the assembly for prayers of all the Heads of State in the Badshahi Mosque at Lahore, gave new life to the centuries old aspirations of people inhabiting the region. That lone scene was more effective than many a great religious sermon. On the other hand the arrival of Sheikh Mujib, and the friendliness he showed to the local citizens at Shalimar Gardens was also of great emotional significance.

Mr. Bhutto had succeeded in getting the occupied territories of Pakistan vacated. The process of repatriation of the P.O.W.'s had also begun. These were very pleasant moments. The nation had shed off its sense of shame, fear, hopelessness and despondence. All this had taken a period of two years to materialize. Undoubtedly the Islamic Summit was the climax, for it helped the defeated nation to see the entire Islamic world standing shoulder to shoulder with it. Had the elections been held at that moment the Peoples' Party would have got the mandate to rule the new Pakistan. It would also have been able to avoid those pitfalls which later led to its humiliation and the defeat of its government.

On the night of 15th September, when Mr. Bhutto asked me for my opinion I had the emotional state of the country in mind and again advised him to hold fresh elections. After getting the verdict of the National Assembly on the Ahmediya question Mr. Bhutto was also thinking on the same lines. However, I am of the opinion that the most appropriate moment for fresh elections was when

Mr. Bhutto had got over with the Islamic Summit and his popularity was at the pinnacle.

Returning to Islamabad after successful conclusion of the Islamic Conference I had started contemplating on the holding of fresh elections. At that time the responsibility of dealing with the media was with me. I very well knew that the maximum onus would fall upon that sector. It was only two ministers in which Mr. Bhutto took special interest - the Ministry of foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Initially he had handed over the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to Hafeez Pirzada but the personally handle all its work. That was a strange sort of period; one crisis was following another. Consequently when Mr. Bhutto handed over the Ministry to me and spelled out his objectives, I distinctly remember having said to him, "I am completely unaware of official rules and procedures. I can very well chalk out a plan to achieve what you desire but I may not quite succeed in controlling the bureaucracy. " "Don't worry about that, "replied about that, "replied Mr. Bhutto, 'the main objective is to find a path in the political field and you do have that capability, so far as official procedures and bureaucracy is concerned, I'll be with you at every step."

His assurance gave me a lot of encouragement and it is also a fact that he stood by what he had said. He helped and guided me at every step with the result that very soon I came to be considered as one of those Ministers who are in full command of their Ministry. The way international opinion was molded regarding the POWs and an effective campaign in that regard was launched during my ministership is now a part of history. All this was because of the guidance and help of Mr. Bhutto. And then to remove the emotional obstacles that hampered the recognition of Bangladesh and get the consensus of the nation for the Simla Agreement were not ordinary matters.

Here I'll disclose something about another event. The first secret direct contact with the government of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman was not made through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but that duty was also performed by my Ministry. Success in such delicate and sensitive matters gave a boost to my confidence. Mr. Bhutto now left me free to deal with all issues. That is exactly why I chalked out a plan of action for my Ministry on my own when Mr. Bhutto again hinted at fresh elections that night.

After making out a rough chart of how I proposed to move initially. I raised with the issue with him one evening while sitting at tea. "When should the dissolution of Assemblies be announced? " I asked.

"No, Maulana, nothing like that is happening presently. "There was a trace of disappointment in his tone.

“But you had taken that decision, “I said, somewhat surprised, “you were so very confident.”

“I am confident even now, “he replied in a thoughtful tone, “but what should I do? The team of intellectuals doesn’t agree.”

This team of intellectuals’ is now an open secret. In the 1977 elections two of that team didn’t even participate and the way the third succeeded is known to all. Had these gentlemen supported the decision would certainly have been held. Following the Islamic conference public opinion had completely swayed in favour of Mr. Bhutto. In view of that, his decision to hold elections then was most appreciate and absolutely correct. At that time Hafeez Pirzada was the most vehement opponent of the idea. But after the long time, following the constitutional Amendment regarding the Ahamdis, when Mr. Bhutto was weighing the pros and cons of a fresh election, it was Hafeez Pirzada who let all others in support of the idea. Himself under an illusion, he was also making Mr. Bhutto believe that the Constitutional Amendment had raised him to the zenith of popularity among the religious minded circles.

“There are only two clear courses of action before us,” he said, “first to make the best of the present favorable conditions and immediately order election or, secondly, to take advantage of the constitutional relaxation of extending the period by one year and start preparations for an election in 1978.”

So far as I was concerned, I was in agreement with the second option. When I expressed my opinion in its favor Mr. Bhutto said tauntingly, “Have you any doubts about your own success?”

“No sir,” I replied, “I had nothing in mind about my own self. In fact it is you who has drawn my attention to that aspect, but it was two years earlier that I had supported the idea of holding fresh elections. Had I been concerned about my own seat I would have given a thought to it at that time.” “No, no,” said Mr. Bhutto, “that was just by way of a joke. Now tell me what are the chances if we dissolve the Assemblies now and announce fresh elections?’

“So far as the Opposition is concerned, it is in disarray at the moment and their report with the public is fairly limited. If we depend upon the weakness of our opponents, this is certainly an opportune time. But then, how can we consider their weakness to be our strength? Things about our own party are not very happy; our workers and leaders have disappointed the people by indulging in petty rivalries and mutual squabbles. In case you have decided to hold elections then you will personally have to lead the campaign keeping in view the conditions of 1970. To establish liaison with the common man, you will have to visit every nook and corner of the country for at least five to six months. It will be for you to establish contact with the people, listen to what they have to say and in

light of their suggestions reorganize the party. Only then we can we hope for success."

The Prime Minister listened to me with all concentration and shortly afterwards started holding open kutcheries. Probably this was his way of having contact with the general public. I don't know whether it was his own idea or some "intellectual" had implanted it in his mind, but very soon he got fed up with the exercise. Referring to the Punjab Chief Minister he remarked in a gathering. "This man arranged a film shooting as it were; he himself selected the actors and also gave them their dialogues!"

By this time things had taken such a turn that despite his desire the Prime Minister could not approach the masses. He had been virtually surrounded. I'm not saying this today but have earlier written about the fate of these open kutcheries in my book, Deedavar. The manuscript of that book was perused both by Mr. Bhutto and his Begum before it went to the press.

In 1976 official activities started all of a sudden. I received a directive from the Prime Minister asking me to prepare a propaganda campaign of full one-week about the achievement of my Ministry. Such directives were sent to the other Ministries as well. In order to find out the exact purpose of the directives I rang up the Prime Minister. He called me over the next day.

As I entered his room he shot out. "You couldn't understand the purpose? Strange!"

"I can assess something," I said in a low tone," but if we are actually heading for an election then what would we be gaining by propagating the achievements of Ministries."

"Do you think our government has done nothing?" There was a frown on the PM's face. To cool him down I had to give a long explanation for what I had said.

That day I came to the conclusion that after remaining in the seat of power for such a long time the Quaid–e–Azam (leader of the Masses) had forgotten his own ways. I just cannot understand, even today, that how could the Bhutto who made fun of Ayub Khan's celebrations of the decade of achievement, himself come to believe that mass contact could be achieved through programs and "weeks" organized by the media and government officials.

By the end of the meeting Mr. Bhutto was in a much better mood. "I have already decided to hold fresh elections, "he said while seeing me off, "the announcement will be made at the first opportune time, and, Maulana, you have to do a lot of work. Very soon I'll be handing over all the electioneering affairs to

you. Prepare yourself," "I'll ever be ready," I said as the Prime Minister shook me by the hand with a smile.

Since I had objected to giving an official color to the election campaign and Mr. Bhutto had taken it as if it were something against his own person, it became incumbent upon me to chalk out a line of action which was of a political nature. Without wasting a second I started working simultaneously on several fronts laying special emphasis on the point that the Prime Minister must personally visit each constituency of the Assembly at least once.

In this connections, to keep the Prime Minister informed about the prevailing situation in every sector I got prepared a questionnaire which I wanted to forward to the party workers in response to which a few paragraphs could be prepared for incorporation in the PM's address and at the same time to keep him aware of the prevailing conditions and problems in each area. My plan was to hand over the entire responsibility of the Prime Minister's tour to the party workers. That would have gone a long way in establishing direct rapport with the populace eliminating all the obstacles and tiers of bureaucracy. The value of such an action can be judge from the fact that when he laid down the mantle of premiership and separate himself from the bureaucratic fold, the workers welcomed him with all their heart, although only a few weeks earlier the crowed welcoming him was now ere near the one which greeted him in August 1977 in Lahore. All that I desired was to keep the emotional relationship of the Prime Minister with the masses. Had that been established it could possible have prevented those declaring Martial Law on the night of July 5, 1977 to take that daring step.

I was busy with chalking out plans for a political course of action for the forthcoming elections when I received a letter on July 13, 1976 from the PM's Special Secretary, Rao Abdul Rashid, covered with a Top Secret seal.

In order to fully understand the happenings in light of the background that I have just given it would be better to go through the aforementioned epistle reproduced on next page.

Rao. A. Rashid Khan,
Special Secretary

PRIME MINISTER SECRETARIT (PUBLIC)
PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE,
RAWALPINDI

July 13, 1976

Dear,

The Prime Minister has been pleased to appoint you as Chief of the Pakistan Peoples Party's Press and Publicity Campaign during the coming elections. You will kindly from a small committee for this purpose consisting of competent and experienced persons who are dedicated to the principles, and ideology of the Party and are totally committed to it. People who are technically up to the mark but whose loyalties lie elsewhere should not be included. It should be a balanced team neither leaving too much to the right, nor to the left. You may take into view people who helped the People's Party in the 1970 elections. While forming the committee, you may also consider giving geographical representation so that the appeal of the party's campaign is universal. Please convey the names of the members of the team for the approval of the Prime Minister as soon as possible.

Another team is being set-up for the publicity and projection of the Prime Minister's personal campaign. This committee will function under Mr. Buch, but there shall be proper coordination between the two committees and the Prime Minister has been pleased to nominated you as the Coordinator.

Yours sincerely,

(Rao A. Rashid Khan)

From: Rao. A. Rashid Khan,
Special Secretary

PRIME MINISTER SECRETARIT (PUBLIC)
PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE,
RAWALPINDI

September 9, 1976

Dear

Kindly refer to my D.O. letter No. 757 – A – Sp1. Secy. / 76, dated 13th July, 1976 and your reply No. F. 3 (1) / PS (RA) / 76, dated 15th July, 1976.

I shall be grateful if you please make it convenient to convey the names of the team, you have selected for PPP's Press and Publicity campaign, for the approval of the Prime Minister.

Yours sincerely,

(Rao A. Rashid Khan)

Maulana Kausar Niazi,
Minister for Religious Affairs,
Minorities Affairs and Overseas Pakistanis,
Islamabad.

It was the Prime Minister's prerogative to appoint anyone as his assistant for his personal convenience and to delegate him powers as he deemed proper. But so far as partly matters were concerned that person should have had political affiliations with it. Rao Rashid happened to be from him to the police service. The end result of instructions coming him from to the Central Information Secretary of the party are before everyone. Organizing a committee for the "personal publicity and projection" of a person who had conceived a new party and organized it, whose personal popularity had won over the hearts of hundreds of thousands of people, whose personal achievements had been flashed over the radio and television during the previous five years could only be the brainwave of an utterly non – political initiated mind. We considered the Prime Minister personal popularity to be the greatest asset of the party but the honorable adviser were going about giving shape to a committee for his "projection". The rare idea of making the election campaign "universal" could only drawn upon the mind of a policeman as none of the politically minded could ever dream of making Mr. Bhutto "universal" to fight the elections. It was a police service man who was giving me instructions regarding the ideology, and lessons in keeping a balance between the right and left!

Reading this letter I naturally felt disturbed. In a meeting with the Prime Minister, I again submitted that the election campaign should be launched on political lines. The officials can do everything but there are two things which are beyond them - - one, to escort a voter up to the polling booth and, two, to create an amiable atmosphere for electioneering. My view finds confirmation from two later happenings - - the referendum was a show of the bureaucracy where as the 1985 election was a contest between political workers.

The Prime Minister regarded my submission to be obsessed by "self – interest" and started to explain as to why he had not given me overall charge of the election campaign. By that time Mr. Bhutto had started sniffing personal benefit in every suggestion. I, therefore, deemed it futile to insist upon my view. "Anyway", I said voluntarily, "whatever arrangements you have made must be better. I'll discharge the duties entrusted to me in this connection with all sincerity. I'll right away comply with the orders of Rao Rashid."

"Mualana," said Mr. Bhutto, "those are my orders, not Rao Rashid's."

That amounted to ticking me off.

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CHAPTER 3

IN THE CLUTCHES OF BUREAUCRACY

The conditions under which elections to the National and the Provincial Assemblies were held in 1970 were in no way normal, at least so far as we were concerned. Our party was still in the process of formation and had hardly any experience of political elections. Although it enjoyed popularity among the masses when the elections were announced, its leadership was most disorganised. The top echelon was comprised of the Chairman and a few of his close comrades - - period! A so – called Executive Council and some other committees were also there, but they had no powers of taking any political decisions.

The main problem while stepping into the election arena was the finding of such candidates who could attract the votes spread all over the country. However, any one found worth while was granted a party ticket. The result was that these novices in electioneering were totally bamboozled after their success; their condition was the same as that of a rustic who suddenly finds himself in company of the gentry. Those who were from families traditionally involved in electioneering were nor from the higher hierarchy of that family. As such they became a headache for the party, of course, barring a few exceptions. To most of them the highest purpose in life for a winning candidate was the allotment of a plot or the grant of a permit. The year 1974 was the most opportune time when this dead weight on the party could be thrown off. It was that very weight which made the party to sink during the 1977 elections.

Another important factor was that in the Punjab Assembly differences between various groups had appeared on the surface and there was an open war between various factions. This could also have been crushed by ordering fresh elections and situation like the one which later developed in Lahore's Ward No.6 could have been avoided. In fact it was this very unfortunate development which caused the first crack in the foundations of an otherwise solid government. Had the elections been held in 1974, soon after the end of the Islamic Summit, Mr. Bhutto would have received the mandate to remain in power up to 1979. That way he could also bring about reforms in the Assemblies.

I know fully well that Mr. Bhutto was very conscious of the dearth of talented persons around him. That is exactly what prompted him to order fresh elections. The only reason why I insisted that these be held immediately after the Islamic Summit was that, in my opinion, his popularity was at it zenith at the time.

Had elections been held at that juncture, Mr. Bhutto and the Peoples' Party could easily have emerged successful with more than two-thirds majority.

However strong and serious the threat which Mr. Henry Kissinger had given to the Prime Minister in 1976, it could never have created the desired conditions. All that later happened was only because of the fact that the elections came only a year after the deal with France was struck. It is my firm belief that no foreign power, however great its influence, can create such situations and help them benefit by it. Determining the time factor between the pact for the purchase of a reprocessing plant and the date of fresh elections was something of prime importance – in fact, the pact should have been concluded after the elections, whether these were held in 1974 or in 1977. That way the government would have got the safe respite of full four years to cope with the repercussion.

It may be clarified that what I am now saying was never in my mind when I suggested the holding of elections in 1974. All that I had in mind at the time was the high graph of popularity of Mr. Bhutto. Unfortunately, things had gradually come down to the level that it was thought essential to form committees for his projection! Even I came to know after quite some time that several committees had been formed as early as in April 1976 to prepare for the 1977 elections campaign. These committees were composed of people like Rao Abdul Rashid and those of his like.

The model election plan framed by the Prime Minister himself was bureaucracy – oriented, laying total reliance on Rao Abdul Rashid besides, Afzal Saeed Khan, Waqar Ahmed, Saeed Ahmed Khan, Massod Mahood, Muhammad Hayat Tumman (Advisor for Public affairs), Mr. Akram Sheikh (Director Intelligence Bureau), Mr. Saeed Ahmed Qureshi (Chief Sec. Sindh), Brig. Malik Muzaffar Khan (Chief Sec. Punjab), Mr. Munir Hussain (Chief Sec. N.W.F.P) Mr. Nasranminullah (Chief Sec. Baluchistan), Maj. – Gen. Imtiaz Ali (Military Secretary to P.M) and Mr. Hamid Jalal (Addl. Secy. to P.M). This, in fact, was the mini – cabinet of the Prime Minister which conceived Operation Victory for the 1977 elections.

Although the federal Minister for Production, Mr. Rafi Raza, was the overall incharge of the election campaign, but according to the P.M.'s plan the entire responsibility for its success was laid on the shoulder of the serving officers - - from the D.C., S.P. and Tehsildars down to the Patwaris. The party leadership and workers were just not given any electioneering responsibilities. In other words, the party was now in the control of the bureaucracy, an example of which I have provided in the previous chapter by reproducing the letter addressed to me by Rao Rashid.

It is highly anomalous that the selfless and devoted party workers who despite their lack of experience and paucity of resources went all out in 1970 and succeeded in helping him enter the portals of power, were now being considered

unworthy of trust for the second election by no other person than the Chairman himself! On the contrary he was laying his faith in the same bureaucracy which he himself had completely out witted in 1970 and won the elections to capture power. Since then those people had very stealthily and cleverly managed to wean him away and shatter his bonds with the masses to take him in their own grip. At the same time they did all they could to lower the prestige of the devoted party workers would simultaneously open a file on him and forward it to the P.M. to prove their irregular and corrupt practices. What to talk of the brave party worker, even the Chairman was duped by this stratagem and he fell so deep into their net that he gradually started considering his own party as of no consequence and each one of its members to be someone out of grind his own axe. That is the reason that instead of relying on the power of the party and keeping faith in the masses he jumped into the field of elections relying on the "secret steps' which Rao Rashid and company had presented before him.

Details of whatever happened because of these underhand methods are unknown to me as I remained totally aloof from all these activities. So far as I was concerned I took part in the election campaign with all my heart but only at the political level.

In pursuance of this line of action, I addressed huge public gatherings and led processions throughout the country providing vigour to he party's election campaign which was tottering in the face of the parties comprising the PNA. Instead of remaining on the defensive, the party workers were helped to assume the offensive. Besides addressing several public meetings during the day, I also kept dealing with the heaps of official files and am proud to say that my Ministry was only second to the Prime Minister's Secretariat where no file remained pending for more than one day. I had picked up this art from Prime Minster Bhutto. It was a routine with him to keep going through the files till late in the night and it was rare for a file to remain undisposed with him for more than a day. He would always put down his remarks or order on it the very same day and forward it to the department concerned. In this respect I have yet to see a person with such iron nerves as his.

Regarding the formation of publicity committees, I sent a reply to Rao Abdul Rashid's letter suggesting the names as asked for by him. I also inquired from him about their scope and tenure of duties, and the mode of paying them for their work. Some known journalists were included in these committees.

Prime Minister Bhutto had a special concern for the party's mouthpiece, Musawaat, and he wanted me to take personal interest in its affairs. In this connection, the letter he wrote to me on 14 June, 1976, is reproduced on next page:

ISLAM IS OUR FAITH
DEMOCRACY IS OUR POLITY
SOCIALISM IS OUR ECONOMY
ALL POWERS TO THE PEOPLE

Chairman
Pakistan People's Party
Prime Minister's House Rawalpindi

*No*__________
*Dated*_____________

Dear Mr.

1. As you are aware, the Daily Musawaat (urdu) is being published from Karachi, Lahore and Lyallpur under the Chief Editorship of Mir Jamil–ur–Rehman. I have mentioned to you on several occasions that this paper has suffered much from lack of patronage and support from our responsible personalities. Hence its position has suffered. It dose not carry the prestige and the weight it enjoyed in the past. The Musawaat is our own paper. It deserves your fullest co – operation and assistance. Only with your active support the paper can rehabilitate its position in competition with the other Urdu dailies of the country. But before this can happen, I repeat, a much larger measure of support is needed from you and your Ministry than the Musawaat has received so far.

2. In another attempt to gain your kind interest in he Musawaat I have senior corespondents placed in the Federal Capital as well as at the Provincial Headquarters. These correspondents (list attached) are experienced journalists. They should receive from you a little more attention and assistance which you normally extend to correspondents of other newspapers. Your co – operation with the Musawaat correspondents is sure to prove most useful in projecting Government's and the Party's policies and programmes. Their reporting will certainly be more effective and more in line with our thinking than what the correspondents of other newspapers have been putting out.

3. I sincerely hope that you will do what you can to promote the development and growth of the Musawaat to a level at which it can compete with credit with the other Urdu dailies which presently have a larger circulation for reason well known to you. I have directed Musawaat's correspondents to keep in touch with you. They will be available at short notice whenever you wish to meet them for briefing them on any matters of public or Party interest. For the sake of the Party and the Government please give a little bit of your very valuable and precious time to your own newspaper. Should you wish to discuss anything with me in this connection, please feel free to do so.

Yours sincerely,

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

Maulana Kausar Niazi,
Minister for Religious Affairs,
Government of Pakistanis,
Islamabad.

In fact, what the Prime Minister desired was that prior to the launching of the election campaign, the Musawaat should again be brought up to its 1970 level so that the publicity is more effective. Unfortunately, that was just not possible as a lot of water had flown under its bridge over the years and Musawaat, for obvious reasons, had lost the credibility it enjoyed during the 1970 elections.

How sensitive the Prime Minister happened to be about the Party's and the government's publicity campaign prior to the holding of elections can be assessed from a letter which he circulated on the 22nd Dec. 1976, during his camp at Lahore. The letter, issued under No. 76(P.M.) P.S.B. 1203D, was sent to Mr. Rafi Raza, myself, Mr. Hanif Khan, Minister of the Provinces. According to the letter some unnamed observer had drawn his attention to the need for orgaising the "bhands" as well to boost the party's election campaign.

An outside observe who is never the less a shrewd perceiver of thiongs has written as follows :-

"The Ministry of Information and the Provincial Information Department are least prepared to foot the election campaign. Like too many cooks, the Federal Information Ministry is heavy headed and can easily spoil the broth. The Provincial Secretariats, especially in the power base of the Punjab, is poorly manned. I am sure by now none have given a thought to general elections and the achievement of the PPP Governments. Our poor Prime Minister has to single handed tell the people what monies the Provinces had under previous government and what they are getting now; how many on – going projects there are now; what are the statistics on the hospitals, schools, colleges opened by the PPP; how the teachers, the doctors etc. have benefited; what labor and peasants have achieved. Where are the posters, with graphs, charts etc? What types of articles are to be written up, how cartoons have to be made, how propaganda, "BHANDS", are to be organized and how the opposition are to be lampooned. These and many more, including rumor cells against the opposition in each town and district and spy cells are to be set up and used. By now their thinking on the subject should be completed, included a personal survey of each districts. Why not find out?"

2. Of course the writer is not aware of some of the preparation we have in hand for the coming elections. However, if the results of the steps being taken by us begin to have an imprint, no observer outside or inside would feel the way he does. I would, therefore, like you to give thought to the suggestions made by him and act on such of them as pertain to your sphere of responsibilities. We must achieve an effective break – through in brining home to the public the achievement of the Peoples Government through all information and news media. This would of course include personal talks and expositions by the Federal and Provincial Ministers on all matters of their special interest and responsibility. The shortcoming pin – point by this observe are also quite well known to the people at large and they would, I am sure, welcome information on all problems beyond their comprehension. Our effort should be to provide them with all the information they need and in such a manner as to command their interest and attention. Substantial exposition and analysis of various achievements of the Peoples Government in a convincing manner, so that the criticism of the opposition is made to appear ridiculous. This world automatically expose the opposition elements and public would see them in their true colours without any deliberate efforts on our part.

3. I hope you get what I have tried to convey to you in this short note. I now leave it to you to decide how best to go about it in your special field of work.

PRIME MINISTER
Camp Lahore
22. 12. 1976

Minister for Production (Mr. Rafi Raza)
Minister for Religious Affairs (Mualana Kausar Niazi)
Minister for Information and Broadcasting

No. D s– 1203 – B – PS (Prime Minister) / 76
Camp Lahore Dated 22 – 12 – 1976

All these hectic activities were in progress when dawned the year 1977. It was in January when a letter from the Prime Minister was delivered at my residence informing me that our tenure is coming to an end and that we have now to face elections. The latter did not bear any Diary Number and was brought by hand. At the bottom of the letter my residential address was given and the letters MNA written against my name instead of Minister. In other words it was a warning that we should take up electioneering in right earnest.

Prime Minister's House,
Rawalpindi

January 8, 1977

My dear Mualana Sahib,

Now that our tenure as the elected representative of the people of Pakistan, during which I had the privilege of serving the country as its Chief Executive, is coming to an end, I wish to express my warm and sincere appreciation to you for your cooperation and assistance during these momentous years.

Providence placed the reins of the government of a dismembered, defeated and demoralized country in my hands and the burden fell on me a daunting challenges. No individual is infallible. I do not claim that I might not have made mistakes. Indeed, I feel I could have done better. But whatever deficiencies remained, they were not for want of trying. Every moment of my time and every ounce of my energy I spent in the service of the country. The odds at times seemed insurmountable. But with God's grace we managed to pull through and the world took note of our nation's remarkable resilience. I can say with confidence that, with the cooperation of the patriotic forces, the honor of the country is fully restored and its people psychologically rehabilitated.

The far – reaching changes ushered in during the last five years are not equalled by any government in our country nor in most developing countries. They pervade the entire spectrum of our national life. They were brought about against the relentless opposition of long – entrenched vested interests which had held Pakistan in their grip. Now, the wind of change is blowing across our beautiful land. Though we have a long way yet to go to make Pakistan conform to the image of progress and prosperity which we cherish, the common man has been made to feel that he is an equal and integral member of society.

It is on the basis of this record that I am again going to the electorate to ask for their mandate for another term so that the socio – economic justice which has been brought about and which is still in the process of taking root could be

successfully consolidated. While judge and judge wisely, it is their privilege to choose their rulers. If they decide differently, I will have no regrets. My feeling will be of a quiet pride that I was called upon to serve my country in the moment of its greatest need and that I did not fail her. Whether the Pakistan People's Party is returned to power or not, whether we have a chance of working together again in the service of our people or not, I take this opportunity of saying "thank you" for standing by me during the most testing period of our country's history.

Pakistan Paindabad.

Yours sincerely,

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

Mualana Kausar Niazi,
MNA,
293, F – 6/3
ISLAMABAD

After receiving this letter I left the charge of the publicity cell temporarily with the late Sheikh Hamid Mehmud and myself started planning the schedule of my tour and public meetings. I kept the Prime Minister fully informed of my programme. In this connection, the note I sent to him on 27 January 1977 drew the following remarks: "Keep it up; I wish you every success."

The real story was that the Interior Minister, the late Abdul Qayum Khan, had quite scared the Prime Minister with stories of the anti – government activities of the religious leaders in the NWFP and telling him that they were in a vengeful mood. The prime Minister, therefore, asked me to proceed immediately to the province and counter their moves. In this connection, the note that I sent to him on 23rd December 1976, is reproduced.

Government of Pakistan
Ministry of Religious Affairs,
Minority Affairs & Overseas
Pakistanis

NOTE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

SUBJECT: - ANTI – PEOPLE ACTIVITY OF ULEMA IN THE NWFP.

Recently the Prime Minister was pleased to order me that I should take appropriate steps to check the anti – people and anti – Government activities in which Ulema in N.W.F.P are indulging. It was also understood that many of the

Umela are making objectionable and anti – Government speeches from time to time.

2. In compliance with the orders of the Prime Minister I visited Peshawar and convened a meeting at which the following were present:

I. Mr. Abdul Raziq Khan, Provincial Minister, N.W.F.P.

II. Secretary, Auqaf Department, N.W.F.P.

III. A representative of the Central Intelligence Agency.

IV. Deputy Inspector General (Special Police), N.W.F.P.

3. At the meeting it was decided that as a first step comprehensive lists of the Ulema of NWFP will be prepared immediately in three parts:

I. List of Ulema who are opposed to the Government. This would be in two parts:

(a) Ulema who have affiliations with the anti – people elements and opposition political parties.

(b) Ulema who are opposition the Government due to some misunderstanding but have no affiliation with opposition or anti – people elements.

II. Ulema who are neutral and have no political affiliations.

III. Ulema of the Auqaf Department.

4. It was further decided that I will undertake a tour of the Province at an early date. Accordingly I plan to go to Peshawar on the 4th January, 1977 to address the Ulema of Peshawar Division. This gathering will comprise of Ulema who have affiliations with opposition political parties or anti – people elements as well as Ulema of the Auqaf Department. The meeting would be a question – answer session so that any misunderstanding in the mind of the Ulema could be removed. No publicity is proposed to be giving to these meetings. I would also meet prominent Ulema individually and would try to brief them as well as Khatibs / Imams belonging to Auqaf Department so that the propaganda of the Opposition Ulema could be rebutted through these Ulema. During my meetings with the Ulema at Peshawar and other places in NWFP. I would also offer all possible assistance for solution of their problems, financial or otherwise but those who still remain hostile to the Government would be left to the Administration to deal with.

5. On 5th January, 1977 I would go to Mardan to address Ulema of Mardan Division. On 9th and 10th January, 1977, I propose to address the ulema at Dera Ismail Khan which would also include Ulema from Bannu. I have already received requests from the party workers to address a public meeting at D.I. Khan and if the Prime Minister approve I will do so.

6. According to the reports of the Provincial Government there is no mischief in the Hazara Division and therefore I do not propose to visit that Division immediately. However, if the Prime Minister has any knowledge of any trouble in Hazara Division, I would certainly pay a visit to Hazara also and take all appropriate steps so deal with the situation.

7. On my return from the visit of NWFP, I will submit a report to the Prime Minister on the results achieved during my tour.

(KAUSAR NIAZI)

23 – 12 – 1976

THE PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister Bhutto's remarks on my note are very clearly visible. They read as under:

"I am certain it will be a very successful task. Best of luck".

In January 1977 the Prime Minister asked me to go ahead with the public meetings. The plan was that I should first address the meetings in all the big cities of the country to put the PNA on the defensive and then the Prime Minister should himself launch an attack on their main strongholds.

The overall control of the election campaign rested with Mr. Rafi Raza. He was sincere to Mr. Bhutto, without any shadow of doubt, and always gave him the correct advice. A thorough gentleman, he happened to be very close to him as well. He was extremely intelligent, but since he was a non – political person he was in a way as good as any bureaucrat. Although he was honest and a man of principles but he kept himself aloof from political wranglings and remained confined to drawing room politics. That was the only reason why he did not contest from any of the constituencies.

With my powerful and hard hitting speeches I completely halted the trust of PNA's election campaign and almost tore it as sunder. And when I touched upon some of the sore points and exposed their weakness, the masses saw, and so did the Prime Minister, that I was the only one from the People's Party to face the nine stars of the PNA and address gathering much larger than they could

muster. That is how the PNA was almost thrown out of the field and the ground was prepared for Mr. Bhutto to step into the arena.

In order to highlight the inner differences between the members of the Alliance, I once threw an open challenge before a mammoth gathering. I said that if these people are sincere about the enforcement of Nizam – i – Mustafa, and if they are together because of some honesty of purpose then they should give a practical demonstration. That is if Mualana Shah Ahmed Noorani could, for once, say his prayers when these are led by Mualana Mufti Mahmud, and not repeat the same prayers later as "qaza", then I pledge on behalf of the People's Party to withdraw all our candidates contesting against the PNA.

This challenge of mine proved extremely effective; it startled people in both the camps. Both myself and those in the PNA very well knew that even if a sword is placed at the throat of Mualana Noorani he will never stand to offer his prayers if the congregation is led by Mualana Mufti Mahmud. However, since Prime Minister Bhutto was not quite aware of the internal dissensions among the ulema, he got rather upset and rang me up the same night. "What is this challenge that you have thrown?", he said, "you don't know these people; they are liable to do exactly what you have said."

Mr. Bhutto didi not leave it at that. The same evening he made a mention of it while addressing a public meeting. "Kausar Niazi has no doubt thrown a challenge to them about withdrawing our candidates, "he said, "but he does not know that if they have to pay homage at the grave of Mirza Ghulam Ahmed Qadiani to win the elections, they would even do that."

I rang up the Prime Minister and assured him that such a thing can never happen and he should not be perturbed. I told him that I am fully in the know of their beliefs and issues at stake. All the same, he kept insisting that I should not throw such challenges in future.

But what could I do? My utterance had already made a great impact on the minds of people and they were now out to verify how much affinity the components of PNA had among themselves. Consequently during a public meeting of the PNA held in Qasim Bagh, Multan, Mualana Mufti Mahmud offered his "maghrib' prayers which were led by Mualana Noorani. That was as if to prove that my challenge had been accepted.

In a public meeting the same evening, I did not hesitate to repeat my challenge. I said, "MY challenge was that Mualana Noorani should offer prayers led by Mualana Mufti Mahmud and not the other way round."

The PNA had just no answer to this!

The next day I had a chance meeting with Mualana Shah Ahmed Noorani at the Lahore airport. Complaining affectionately, he said, “you have touched a very sore point.”

The election campaign was now in full swing. Judging from the enthusiastic response of the public, I was positive that the People’s Party would win by a large majority, although I was also aware that in some constituencies losing or winning a seat would be by only a slender margin of votes. All the same, I was convinced that PPP would emerge victorious.

Uptill that time, I was not aware of Mr. Bhutto’s plan called “Operation Victory”. Although I knew that he seeks information directly from the D.C. or S.P. of a district, but I had just no idea that Rao Rashid and company had hatched a regular plot for rigging the elections. These were the people who formed the rearguard while we remained in the forefront fighting a political battle through political tactics.

The first time that I came to know of the rigging was just two days after March 7th when the PNA had rejected the election results and already launched its agitation.

One evening, Mr. Bhutto was sitting in the PM House with Hafiz Pirzada, Rafi Raza and a couple of other friends. Looking towards Pirzada, he said, “Hafiz, how many seats must have been rigged?”

“Sir ……. Around 30 to 40,” was his brief reply.

“Can’t we ask the PNA to have their candidates elected against these seats and assure them that we’ll not contest them?”

you cannot imagine my condition when I heard the Prime Minister say that! All that I can tell you is that I kept staring blankly at his face, and at the same time considering myself to be a totally ignorant fool.

So far as I was concerned, I had all along endeavored to my limit to provide a clear and clean victory to the People’s Party. During my speeches I had maintained such a tempo which was enough to draw the voters towards our party’s booths on the election day. And now …. What was I hearing! Was the Prime Minister aware that the polls would be rigged? …… did he know that rigging was to be done? I just could not believe my ears ….. my entire labor appeared to have gone totally waste.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

CHAPTER 4

CONSULTING ASTROLOGERS AND PLAMISTS

On 7th January 1977, Prime Minister Bhutto made an announcement in the National Assembly that the next elections would be held on 7th March. We were now consulted about the election strategy to be adopted. After discussion, we came to the conclusion that the opposition political parties suffered from so many mutual differences and are so badly divided among themselves, that it is almost impossible for them to stay united and put up a candidate by consensus to face a People's Party nominee.

Till that time, a united group of some political parties, known as UDP, was still in existence, but Jamiat –ul – Ulema – e – Pakistan and Tehrik – I – Istiqlal were out of it. The most notable and organised political party in the UDF was Jammat – I – Islami, the other being NDP, headed by Sher Baz Mazari. In fact his group was composed of those whose political activities had come to an end after the ban on NAP. All the same, Sher Baz Mazari and Begum Nasi Wali Khan kept making efforts to revive the banned party and met with some success as well.

Soon as the Prime Minister announced the date for the next elections, there was an unbelievable upsurge in the ranks of the opposition parties. According to intelligence reports, a new political electoral alliance was expected to be formed any moment. Though a component of the United Democratic Front (UDF), the JUP hardly enjoyed any importance in its ranks due to the predominance of the Jamaat – I – Islami, rather, it had a better understanding with the Tehrik – I – Istiqlal of Air Marshal Asghar Khan.

Immediately after the announcement of elections, Sardar Sher Baz Mazari and Prof. Ghafoor Ahmed dashed to Abbottabad and met Asghar Khan, inviting him to join the UDF. However, Asghar Khan gave them a cold shoulder as he had earlier suffered at the hands of such alliances. Yet both Prof. Ghafoor and Mazari tried to convince him of the advantages of their offer and to make him believe that the only way to oppose the People's Party effectively was to win the confidence of the electoral alliance is formed. However, the only success that the two achieved during the meeting was that both Asghar Khan and Mualana Noorani agreed to meet and talk to all the leaders of the UDF.

Ultimately, when a meeting of all the opposition leaders was held, both Asghar Khan and Mualana Noorani, already averse to electoral alliance, put

forward their firm conditions on which they could consider joining them. These had nothing at all to do with the manifesto or programme of the proposed alliance, nor were they based on any kind of ideological stand. Basically, these pertained to the allocation of seats with JUP insisting that the General Secretary of the alliance should be from its party.

The Jamaat – I – Islami was anxious for the formation of the alliance at any cost and when JUP suggested the name of Rafiq Bajwa for the Secretary Generalship, it was accepted forthwith.

It was the Jammat-I-islami which played the leading role in the formation of the PNA and even temporarily gave up its erstwhile enmity with the JUP. The Jamaat had always considered Rafiq Bajwa to be a person of dubious character. He was liable to commit a blunder at any time giving a good excuse to Jamaat – I – islami to wrest the post of Secretary – General from the JUP. Consequently, its "Secret Service" kept a constant surveillance on Rafiq Bajwa. According to later reports, some confidants of Rao Rashid and Muhammad Hayat Tumman occupied important position in the JUP hierarchy and it were they who played an important role in getting the PNA secretary ship for the JUP. On his part, Prime Minister Bhutto's sole wish was that Asghar Khan should not get any important position in the alliance of the opposition parties, whatever shape it ultimately takes. He was especially averse to his being offered the leadership of that alliance. As per thinking of the Prime Minister, the Western educated and broadminded Asghar Khan could well provide the political concept of alternate leadership to the masses, especially when he already held an attraction for them. It was therefore that, in addition to himself, Rao Rashid and Tumman went all out top have Mufti Mahmud nominated as the head of the PNA. Their thinking was that he would stand nowhere as compared to the personality of Mr. Bhutto. Consequently, all the intelligence agencies were also purchased for the purpose although I would not like to divulge who got how much for his services.

In short, all these efforts bore fruit and Asghar Khan could not get the leadership of the PNA. In fact the first barrier in his way proved to be his own ally, the JUP, which claimed and got the post of Secretary General. Because of that the other components of PNA came up with the objection that the two top positions should not go to parties which have been outside the folds of UDF. Some more such objections concerning the person of Asghar Khan were also injected into the ranks of PNA.

Despite fully aware of all these inside doings, I still held a different opinion. My suggestion to the Prime Minister was that if he wanted to achieve something by covert means, it should be to sabotage the formation of an electoral alliance and see that the opposition parties put up their candidates individually to oppose the Peoples' Party nominees. However, Mr. Bhutto and his advisers were so unduly confident that they saw no threat in such an alliance. To them any alliance not headed by Asghar Khan stood nowhere in the face of the People's Party.

Ultimately the leadership of the 9 – Party electoral alliance - - PNA - - was maneuvered for Mufti Mahmud and even celebrated; it was taken for granted that the election was half won! Mr. Bhutto was made to believe that when people compare him with Mufti Mahmud, they would straightaway reject the latter as the future Prime Minister, more so because he had no international standing.

MR. Bhutto was now happy that the PNA could not cause him any harm. Consequently, he went to make the biggest blunder of the election campaign by allowing the Election Commission to allot the same symbol to all the nine parties comprising PNA, although they had not merged into one and maintained their separate identities. Mr. Bhutto was within his right to object to the allotment of a common election symbol to the PNA and the Election Commission would well have unheld it. Under his special powers as the Chief Executive, he permitted the allotment of a common symbol to the PNA.

So far as that symbol, Plough, was concerned, the Prime Minister's close team of technocrats was of the opinion that it hardly held any attraction for the masses as compared to the People's Party's symbol, Sword. In fact, they contented, that it would go to spoil the image of Mufti Mahmud and the other leaders in the PNA.

To me this was the biggest flaw in framing of the political strategy, but then, who listens to a feeble voice in an uproar! Such were the people posing as experts in electioneering and enjoying the confidence of Mr. Bhutto, who did not even know the basic of a political process. Their total experience was confined to the bloodbath in Dhaka and Balochistan, or else were adept at licking the shoes of their superiors during service in the police and being rough with the general public.

Whatever else a person may not learn during his service with the police, he does learn one particular thing – keeping the boss happy by any straight or crooked method to keep his own job secure. To this end some of them cross all limits. They are clever enough to make the person in authority believe that it is they who actually provide him all his strength and power.

That is what exactly befell Mr. Bhutto - - he was completely in the grasp of such advisers.

Personally, Mr. Bhutto was an extremely intelligent, realistic, and enlightened person. He was a great man in every way. He liked all great men, he had some weaknesses as well. He liked those people who constantly tried to prove themselves to be more Christian than Christ himself! As such those were the ones who were his favourites. In addition, a provincial Minister of Sind who was devoted to occult sciences, in particular palmistry and astrology, had also come near to him. He happened to have close relationship with a palmist and

astrologer of Sri Lanka. When the Prime Minister declared the 7th of March 1977 as the date for the next election, it was that very gentleman who had brought the tidings of its efficacy after consulting the Sri Lanka astronomer. To some extent, Mr. Bhutto also had faith in such occult sciences.

When the Sri Lanka astronomer confirmed hat the date, 7th of March, was auspicious for the elections. Mr. Bhutto sent a print of his palm through a friend to the renowned palmist of the country, M.A. Malik. He is undoubtedly a master in his field and has reached the elevated position through scientific research. Seeing the print of his palm he got to several conclusions but fearing it would annoy the PM, he did not divulge all that he read in the print to the friend who had brought it to him.

Much later, when Mr. Bhutto was in Kot Lakhpat Jail facing trial for complicity in the murder of Ahmed Raza Kasuri's Father, M.A. Malik showed me the print of his palm. Placing his finger on a specific line he pointed out that the brain line tends to droop at the end. There was also a circle around that spot. "What do you conclude from this?" He asked me. I was silent, he then spoke up. "This man's brain will lead him to the gallows," he said.

Mr. Malik's conjecture was absolutely correct, as proved later. Even I reached the same conclusion after looking at 5th print.

During his visit to Sri Lanka, the Prime Minister told Mrs. Bandranaikey that he would like to see her official astrologers. She arranged accordingly. During this meeting with them, Mr. Bhutto told them of the date - - 7th March - - he had fixed for the next election and asked them to asses its possible outcome. Not a single one of the astrologers made any answer - - it was as if they were dumbfounded. After much insistence from Mr. Bhutto the senior most of the astrologers had only this to say: Now when you have already announced the date, what opinion can we give?"

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CHAPTER 5

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

It was against this background that the masses were to use their franchies on 7th March 1977. One of Mr. Bhutto's intense desires was well known to me; he had expressed that more than once in my presence. And that was. ….. he wanted a victory with two-thirds majority!

It is possible that the reports pouring in about the public meetings and processions organised by the PNA had made him apprehensive that a two – thirds majority would not be possible, but it is also plausible that his own venerable advisers had put that into his head so that they be permitted to show their real worth.

As things stood, the People's Party had put up candidates for all the 200 seats of the National Assembly. Out of these, 19 had already been declared elected without contest - - 15 in Sindh and 4 in Balochistan. The 8 seats of the Tribal Areas would automatically have gone to the winning party. The only seats left to be contested were 3 in Balochistan, 115 in the Punjab, 26 in the NWFP and 28 in Sindh. To get a simple majority only 101 seats were needed but for a two-thirds majority it was essential to win 105 out of the remaining 172 seats.

The PNA had not put up any candidate in Balochistan. In the remaining three provinces all that they needed were 101 seats for a simple majority and 132 for a two-thirds majority, which on the face of it, appeared a difficult proposition. That was because PNA was contesting only 169 seats.

Under these circumstances it was not all that difficult for the People's Party to obtain a two-thirds majority. Some of the PNA nominees were contesting from more than one constituency. Even if they had won all these seats they would ultimately have to retain only one and vacate the rest. As such there was every chance of their losing some seats in a bye – elections.

The distribution of tickets to the nine parties comprising the PNA was as follows: Muslim League - 36; Tehrik-I-Istiqlal 30; Jamaat-I-Islami 31; Jamiat-ul-Ulema-I-Pakistan 23; Jamiat-ul-Ulema-I-Islam 24; Pakistan Democratic Party 13; Khaksar Tehrik 2. The Muslim Conference was not given any ticket. As such there were 196 seats on which the PNA had formed a government by virtue of winning the elections by the simple majority, it could never have lasted for more than three months - the divergence of views and differences among them being so very obvious.

There appeared no possibility of the PNA obtaining even a simple majority especially when at the height of electioneering some statements were made by them about the steps they would take in the future. That completely wrecked their entire campaign. For example, some statements of Rafi Bajwa, Secretary – General of PNA, concerning women made them lose almost all the female votes.

Under such conditions, I do not think there was any need of resorting to rigging of polls. However, it was unfortunate that Prime Minister Bhutto himself was the first to make an incorrect move by getting himself elected unopposed. That was something just not needed. It would have raised his status had he contested the election and made the PNA candidate, Mualana Jan Muhammad Abbasi may have been, he stood nowhere as compared to the popularity of Mr. Bhutto. He would have secured only a few hundred votes and lost his deposit money. That was what happened to him later in his 1985 elections when the person opposing him was not a politician of international stature like Zulfikar Ali Bhutto but Shah Muhammad Khuhro. Having such a person carried away and kept in police custody till the filing of nomination papers was such a feat of the bureaucracy which cast an indelible slur on the electoral integrity of the Prime Minister and brought dispute to the concept of fair elections.

The first candidate of the People's Party to be elected unopposed was Sultan Ahmed Chandio, from Constituency 164 of Larkana. That was just a sort of trailer shown to please Mr. Bhutto by the Home Secretary Sindh, Mr. Muhammad Khan Junejo and Mr. Khalid Malik, Deputy Commissioner, Larkana. Besides trying to prove their efficiency, they wanted to tell him how easy it is for them to win the elections for him.

The last date for filing nomination papers for elections to the National Assembly was 19th January. The same evening news was broadcast over the radio and TV about the unopposed election of Prime Minister Bhutto and some other leading personalities of the party. The next morning all the newspapers carried the same picture of Mr. Bhutto in the same size - - 3 columns, 9 inches, and bore the same caption.

As per later reports, Mualana Jan Muhammad Abbasi had been taken into custody by the police on the evening of 18th January and released the next morning after the time of filing of nomination papers was over. The statements issued by him in this connection formed the very basis of the PNA's election campaign. It was this very doing of the bureaucracy which went to cause untold harm to the Peoples Party's election campaign.

Among the 19 candidates to be declared elected unopposed during the initial stages of the election were 15 from Sindh. These were Nur Muhammad Lund (Sukkur 4), Mir Mehran Khan Bijrani (Jacobabad), Abdul Fatah Memon (Nawabshah 2), Shabbar Ahmed Shah (Nawabshah 3), Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Larkhana 1), Makhdum Muhammad Zaman Talib ul-Maula (Hyderabad 1), Haji

Najmuddin Leghari (Badin 1), Niaz Muhammad Wasan (Tharparker 3), Malik Sikander Khan (Dadu 3), and Ata Muhammad (Sanghar 2). The four candidates elected unopposed from Balochistan were: Taj Muhammad Jamali (Sibi 1), Abdul Nabi Jamali (Sibi 2), Prince Mohyueddine (Kalat 1), and Amanullah Gichki (Kalat 2), Sultan Ahmed Chandio (Larkhana 2) and Mumtaz Ali Bhutto (Larkhana 3) were also elected unopposed.

Looking at the list of all the stalwarts elected unopposed, there were hardly a few who appeared to deserve the honor. One of them was Mr. Ghulam Mujtaba Khan Jatoi and the other Makhdum Muhammad Zaman Talib-ul-Maula. The rest were courtesy the Prime Minister's special election cell headed by Mr. Rao Abdur Rashid.

In keeping with the tradition of these unopposed elections, all the four Chief Ministers of the provinces followed suit to render the entire situation even more farcical. As thing stood, there was only the possibility of Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi and Nawab Raisani to be elected unopposed, but no one else. An example can be cited as a proof. When Nasurllah Khattak's unopposed election to the National Assembly was declared invalid by the Election Commission, Mualana Abdul Haq gave him a shameful defeat from the Peshawar constituency.

Although Section 144 had been lifted during the elections, yet the Emergency under Defence of Pakistan Rules was very much in vogue. By achieving success through underhand means in the summer elections in 1975 in Azad Kashmir, some people had won the favour of the Prime Minister. The way they had out manouvered Sardar Abdul Qayum Khan and his Muslim Conference had endeared them to him; they had almost become a must. Although there was a race among them to prove as to who was the past master in the art of wangling, yet Rafi Raza, as incharge of the election campaign, very courageously tried to reject their electoral strategy. All the same, the god's good man appeared helpless in several aspects.

The most difficult situation which these advisers had to face was when with the lifting of Section 144 restrictions, there was a flood of processions and public meetings under the auspices of the PNA. In February 1977, when the elections campaign was at its peak, their dismay was worth watching. By then all their wishful thinking had been obliterated and the high hopes they had given to the Prime Minister were nowhere in evidence. The farce of unopposed victories that they had put up initially lay exposed.

It was then that the Prime Minister fully realised that he had to lay off his trust on his advisers and come out in the open to face the PNA on the political front. Besides himself, there were hardly three or four other speakers in the ranks of the People's Party who could effectively rebut the harangues of about ten orators of the PNA standing before huge gatherings. It was then that Mr. Bhutto directed me to address meetings organised by the Peoples Party all

over the country. This was despite the fact that Rao Rashid was even then sending notes to the Prime Minister that no one else but he himself should address the gathering otherwise it would tend to lower hi image before the public. However, it appeared that Prime Minister Bhutto by then had confined such people within the four walls of their "primary duty," and expelled them from the political front. In this respect the Prime Minister had high expectations from me and I am thankful to the Almighty that taking cues from their own offensive utterings, I forced the PNA into a retreat.

On the 28th of January I initiated the Party's election campaign by addressing a public meeting in Sargodha. On a note I sent to the PM on the occasion, he remarked. "Keep it up: I wish you every success.

NOTE FOR PRIME MINISTER

I am state for the information of Prime Minister that I am addressing the first public meeting in connection with the Party's election campaign in the Punjab in Sargodha tomorrow, the 28th January.

I have received, and continue to receive, a large number of requests through letters, telegrams and personal visits by group asking me on behalf of Party workers and local Party Offices in the Punjab to address meeting in their areas. I am not accepting the invitation direct. Instead, I have asked the Chief Minister is unable to formulate an itinerary I shall make out my own programme, trying to accommodate as many requests as possible and endeavouring to cover all areas equally. I shall, of course, inform Prime Minister about the schedule of meetings to be addressed by me.

In Sindh, after consulting the Chief Minister, a programme of public meetings has been drawn up as follows:

4 February	Jacob Lines, Karachi
5 February	Hyderabad
6 February	Landi & Korangi (Karachi)
18 February	Baldia Area, Karachi
19 February	Sukkur
20 February	Karachi, and
25 February	Orangi, Karachi

I hope this meets with Prime Minister's approval.

So far as N.W.F.P. is concerned, I have already covered most of the province and have addressed public meetings in Malakand, Swat, Abbottabad, Haripur, Mansehra, Kohat and Bannu. Still to be visited are Peshawar and Mardan, and I hope to speak to public gatherings there is consultation with the Chief Minister. I am in touch with his and have asked him to let me know when I am needed.

I am glad to report to Prime Minister that my meetings with the Ulema in NWFP have been extremely successful. According to reports from the Provincial Government there has been a noticeable change in the thinking and attitude of the Ulema after my free and frank discussions with them which helped to remove their unfounded suspicions and doubts.

I am forgetting my own constituency in the welter of invitations from elsewhere. I foresee a fight there, but inshaallah the Party shall prevail. I propose to spend some 8 or 9 days there; not at a stretch but through a number of visits of a day or two each.

For the rest of the time, I am at the disposal of Prime Minister wherever he wants me to go.

Submitted for information.

(Kausar Niazi)
27 . 1 . 1977

The Prime Minister

As per schedule, I addressed a big public gathering at Sialkot on 31st January, and launched a massive assault on the PNA by exposing their internal contradictions. On the 1st of February, I again addressed a public meeting at Sialkot. I reached the NWFP on 2nd Feb., and addressed a big gathering at Nausehra; on Feb. 4th, I spoke at Jacobs Lines in Karachi and on the 5th I addressed a historic public meeting at Hyderabad. I went to Karachi on the 6th of Feb., and conducted a massive attack on the stronghold of the J.I. Later, on 12th Feb. I addressed a big gathering in the Punjab, at Gujranwala. On the 18th Feb. I again went to Sindh and delivered a speech at Karachi followed by an address at Sukkur on 19 Feb. and again at Karachi on 20 Feb.

Still at Karachi, I addressed a mammoth gathering in Orangi on 25th February.

The P.M. had specifically arranged my public meetings in such a way, that when I left a city after addressing a gathering he would follow and address a much larger gathering in the same city. Now I don’t remember all the dates and places of these public meetings but I do remember that the P.M. used to get a

report of my meetings the same evening through different agencies and made sure to congratulate me on the telephone.

By holding public meetings, one followed by the other, we threw the Opposition on the defensive. In all these meetings the main points which the Prime Minister highlighted were the steps taken by the Ministry under my charge for the spread and enforcement of Islamic teachings. In not a single public meeting did Mr. Bhutto make any mention of “Socialism”. In fact, even officially the Party’s slogan of “Socialism is our economy” was changed over to “Musawat – I – Muhammadi is our economy.”

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CONSULTING THE GENERALS

It was around 8 p.m. on 7th March 1997 that the election results started to be announced over the radio and TV. During the whole of that day I remained busy in my own constituency - - Pasrur. My opponent from the PNA was a local advocate. Judging from the enthusiasm people had shown during my public meetings I had hardly any doubt about my success.

The first election result to be announced that evening was about the success of Raja Zahur Ahmed of the PPP from Constituency No. 35, Islamabad. It was Prof. Ghafoor Ahmed of PNA who was facing him. However, the news of my election from NA 107 was announced at about 3 – 30 a. m. on 8th March. Hearing of my success I immediately left for Islamabad thinking of returning after a day or two to thank the voters of my area.

Elections to the Provincial Assemblies were due on 10th March. By the time I reached Islamabad, most of the election results had come in confirming that the PPP had obtained a two – third majority.

The same evening, the PNA rejected the election result terming the entire exercise to be a fraud and a masterpiece of rigging. Even the 36 candidates elected from the Alliance were asked to hand in their resignations to the head of PNA, Mualana Mufti Mahmud. At the same time, the PNA announced its decision to boycott the Provincial Assembly elections schedules for 10th March, and the lunching of a countrywide agitation from 14th March onwards. Their demand was the holding of fresh elections under the supervision of the army and immediate resignation of Prime Minister Bhutto.

Unbelievable success in the elections aside, the situation as it prevailed was extremely disturbing, at least so far as I was concerned. The world Press, especially the BBC, was giving detailed coverage to the standpoint of the PNA and making it known all over.

The PNA's mass popularity was proved on the 10th of March when the Provincial Assembly elections were scheduled and the polling booths lay deserts. That day it was only the People's Party candidates who were in the field. Complete boycott of the Provincial Assembly polls gave me a clear indication that the anti – government campaign to be launched by the PNA on 14th March would prove very effective.

On 11th of March, the PNA gave a call for a countrywide strike which evoked a positive response from most of the major cities, especially Karachi. From the 14th started the protest demonstration with clouds of tear gas going up in every street of the country, baton charges all over, and shouts of "Down with you" ringing in the air.

On 18th of March, several important leaders of the PNA were put under arrest. These included Asghar Khan, Shah Ahmed Noorani and Sher Baz Mazari.

Having received an encouraging response to the various appeals made by it, the PNA had gained a lot of confidence. Although report of the arrests seldom appeared in the Press, yet Karachi had become a hot bed. Disturbance took such a turn there that some parts of the city had to be under curfew. To aid the civil police, contingents from the FSF and army were called in. the localities of New Karachi, Liaqatabad, Nazimabad and Federal B area were totally under the control of the army. Despite that, a horrific incident took place in Pathan Colony when an infuriated crowed set fire to the house of Habibur Rehman, President of PPP's Ward Committee, burning alive 14 of the occupants. News also came in that two of the attackers had also been killed by firing from within the house.

Besides setting ablaze various PPP offices, damage was also caused to other public and private property. The biggest financial loss was suffered by Republic Motors where cars and material worth Rs. 25 crore was destroyed by fire.

Starting from Karachi, disturbances gradually spread to other parts of the country. With the arrest of all the notable PNA leaders, the movement was now totally in the hands of the masses.

In fanning the Campaign, the leadership role was played by mosques, Lahore's Masjid – I – Shuhada gaining worldwide fame. Following the arrest of the top ladder people in the PNA, the movement against the government was then practially being led by imams of the mosques. Beginning as a protest movement against had now taken the shape of a demand for the enforcement of Nizam –I – Mustafa. It was undoubtedly the Jkmiat –e – Ulema –e- Pakistan which played the leading role in converting the anti – government agitation into one for the enforcement of Nizam –I – Mustafa.

It was on 21st of March that the Election Commission announced the official results of the polls held on 7th March. As a consequence, the first session of the National Assembly was called on 26th March so that the newly elected members could take their oath and form a government to run the country for the next five years. On its part, the PNA was all out for intensifying the agitation by that date. Towards that end, Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani held out an open threat during a Press conference in Karachi that those attending the

"unconstitutional and illegal" session of the Assembly on 26th March would be doing so at their own risk.

During the four – week long agitation, property worth about Rs. 25 crore had been destroyed. Just then, Air Marshal Asghar Khan wrote a letter to the heads of the three Services instigating them to rise against the Bhutto Government. According to BBC, 3000 copies of the letter were distributed among other officers of the armed forces.

On his part, the Prime Minister had already initiated, (by mid – March), individual and collective contacts with the top echelon of the armed forces. Initially meeting different generals in his capacity of Supreme Commander of the Armed forces, he kept assessing the possibilities of seeking the army's support in crushing the PNA agitation. When the agitation kept gaining further ground, the frequency of his meetings with Service Chiefs and Crops Commanders increased manifold.

During these meetings, he wanted to dig out what was in their mind vis – a – vis the agitation and the current situation; and make them expose themselves somehow. However his intention back fired; it was he who was exposed. The generals could very clearly see his own weaknesses and lack of control over the administration. Trying to involve the generals in a political process and discussing such matters with them. It was from this point that the generals started to realise their importance in matters of a political nature. In other words, that was the starting point of the extreme action they took on the night of 5th July, 1977.

It was Prime Minister Bhutto himself who had opened the door, way back in 1974, for the army to meddle in politics. That was when he had asked Gen. Tikka Khan to launch a military operation against the Marri And Mengal tribes of Balochistan. As it was, Gen. Tikka Khan already enjoyed quite some repute for the blood bath in East Pakistan; he had returned from there earning the title of "Butcher".

Ironically, Gen. Tikka Khan was the person who was totally averse to Mr. Bhutto and the People's Party during the tenure of Yahya Khan. Had Mr. Bhutto's popularity graph been as low in 1973 as it was in 1977, it was ever possible that after the military operation in Balochistan. Gen. Tikka Khan would himself have overthrown Mr. Bhutto. It was lucky for Mr. Bhutto that those days the two major provinces of the country - - Punjab and Sindh - - were firmly in the administrative grip of Ghulam Mustafa Khar and Ghulam Mustafa Jatol, the personal popularity of both helping to keep up the image of Mr. Bhutto and thwarting any designs of Tikka Khan to try and overthrow the government.

During our election campaign of 1970, Gen. Tikka Khan happened to be the Martial Law Administrator, Zone A. he had his office in the Assembly Hall.

One day he called me over. Ostensibly for the purpose of giving me a warning. In his own peculiar style, he let out a threat. “You and your paper are creating quite some nuisance, “ he said, “but young man, this is not proper. I do not want that any harm comes to you; but now we’ll have to follow different path. Remember, we shall never allow the People’s Party and Bhutto to assume power.”

These were the words of Tikka Khan which I could never forget - - not even at the time when Prime Minister Bhutto inducted him into the Cabinet as Minister of State for Defence and National Security. Forgetting all his doings of the past, this gentleman now considered licking the shoes of Mr. Bhutto to be the straight path to salvation. And a bundle of ideosyncracies was Prime Minister Bhutto as well, he would derive pleasure in seeing his old adversaries and opponents falling low before him. It was the same avid satisfaction which made him appoint Mian Mumtaz Daultana as the High Commissioner in Britian, Khan Abdul Qayum Khan as the Minister of Interior, Pir Ali Muhammad Rashidi as an Adviser, and Tikka Khan as Minister of State for Defence.

Keeping up with the threat given to me, Gen. Tikkha Khan had me sentenced in 1970 to five years imprisonment by a Military Court. It was he himself who confirmed this sentence. Consequently, I contested the 1970 elections from my cell in jail, my party workers representing me in public meetings in my constituency in Pasrur carrying large size pictures of mine with handcuffs around my wrists. By the grace of God I won the election with a thumping majority - - the number of votes I secured in the whole of Pakistan were second only to those polled by Sheikh Msujibur Rehman.

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CHAPTER 7

PARTIAL MARTIAL LAW

In April, when the P.N.A. agitation was at its peak, the police having failed to control it, the “honourable” technocrats stood completely bewildered, leaving Mr. Bhutto alone to suffer for having heeded to them when he was at the pinnacle of his power. Naturally, he started considering those characters to be totally worthless. To stay in power, he was now looking for help towards his erstwhile political associates. At the same time, he expanded the scope of his meetings with army generals.

So far as Air Marshal Asghar Khan is concerned, he had been openly threatening during the campaign that on assuming power he would hang all those officers, including Masud Mehmud, and even Prime Minister Bhutto, on the Kohala Bridge. Visualising that the game was almost over and Mr. Bhutto would soon be overthrown, those “honourable” advisers were now mainly concerned about saving their own skin.

Factually, to my mind, the main reason, of course besides several others, for the loosening of Mr. Bhutto’s grip over the government was the ruthlessness with which the public at large was dealt with by the bureaucratic stalwarts who had assumed seats of authority, courtesy the Prime Minister. As Hazrat Ali Murtaza (RA) has so well said. “the reign of an infidel can last, even that of an idolator and a hypocrite, but never that of a tyrant.”

During our tenure of power, the masses were gagged and made to bow unceremoniously. As a consequence, after the announcement of elections on 7th January when the PNA came into being on 21st January, everyone became vocal and active, every head stood upright, every neck became stiff.

A tyrant is always a coward, and same were those of the Bhutto era. By mid – April they were more than anxious to serve their links with the Government and flee for safety. They were so clearly befuddled that Mr. Bhutto stopped even talking to them about any issue whatsoever. Power of the masses had now clearly dawned upon him - - the power which was once his own greatest assets and which his very same advisers had made him lose by their wily tricks. The immense influence which these advisers wielded can be gauged from the letters they used to dish out prior to the elections on behalf of the cabinet ministers and Mr. Bhutto.

Standing fully exposed, Mr. Bhutto now totally discarded them and started giving due importance to his political confreres, in addition seeking support of the

army generals. However, where he took the correct decision of breaking the shackles of bureaucracy and placing reliance on his political allies, he made the vital mistake of currying favour with the generals. It is indeed a misfortune that great people are always prone to making great mistakes, and it is these mistakes which then play a major role in their downfall.

On the political front, the Prime Minister wooed Malik Ghulam Mustafa Khar, his lost power – base in the Punjab, and got him back into his fold.

By this time, the man in charge of the election campaign, Mr. Rafi Raza, had completely given up. The drafting of constitutional and legal papers was left to Hafeez Pirzada, while I was relied upon for seeking some political understanding with the religious leaders and bringing them round. Even during discussions with the Crops Commanders, it was the two of us who aided the Prime Minister. In some of these meetings, Hamid Raza Gilani and Hanif Khan were also present, and in one or two, Sheikh Rashid, Tikka Khan and Aziz Ahmed. An odd meeting was joined in by Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi and Mumtaz Ali Bhutto as well. In fact Mr. Bhutto wanted to cash upon the cordial relations which Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi enjoyed with the generals. As Chief Minister of Sindh where he had endeared himself to the masses by his courteous behaviour he had also won the respect of some of the generals.

In the meeting where the decision was taken to impose a partial martial law in order to bring about an end to the agitation, those besides the Prime Minister, were the Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Zia – ul – Haq, Air Chief Marshal Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Hafeez Pirzada, Aziz Ahmed, and Maj. Gen. Abdullah Malik. Expressing his disapproval of the role played by the police, the Prime Minister said that the public was throwing garlands around their neck; they even accepted cold drinks offered to them. On the other side, he contended, the judiciary is behaving in such a manner that if we put someone under arrest the magistrates order his release. As soon as the Prime Minister had said all that he wanted to say the Chief of the Army Staff, Gen. Zia – ul – Haq, spoke up voluntarily. “Sir,” he said, “we will sort them out.”

“But how?” queried the Prime Minister.

“We will enforce material law in the areas which are most disturbed,” said the General.

Mr. Bhutto now looked towards him with piercing eyes. “How can we enforce martial law,” he said, “there is no such provision in the Constitution!”

“Sir,” came up Gen. Zia – ul – Haq, “but an amendment can also be made in the Constitution!”

At this suggestion, Mr. Bhutto sent for the Attorney General, Yahya Bakhtiar, and consulted him.

This meeting was held in the last week of April, and the person to narrate who all took place there in is Air Marshal (Retd.) Zulfiqar Ali Khan. However, a day prior to this meeting, another conclave was held in the PM's House, the details of which have been given by Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Abdullah Malik.

I would like to point out here that Maj. Gen. Abdullah Malik was the person whom Prime Minister Bhutto liked immensely. From the way he spoke of him in my presence many a time, it seemed that he wanted to see him as the next Chief of the Army Staff.

Gen. Abdullahh Malik was a person imbued with several qualities. Candid in his observations, he expressed his opinion freely. Even in those days, he did not feel shy of expounding his views when the PM's advisers were busy making all sorts of ridiculous suggestion. Personally, Gen. Malik was totally loyal to Mr. Bhutto and one of his ardent admirers. He was then Chief of Staff to the Chief of the Army Staff.

According to Gen. Abdullah Malik, he received a telephone call one evening asking him over to the PM's House. Abiding by protocol, he wanted to inform his boss. Gen. Zia –ul – Haq, that the Prime Minister had sent for him. He rang up the General but could not contact him.

Since the time given was around 7 p.m. he went over. He was made to sit in the drawing room. After a while the Prime Minister walked in. That was the day when he spoke to him directly, for the first time, about the conditions prevailing in the country, and sought his opinion whether promulgation of martial law would be proper to stop the agitation. Gen. Abdullah Malik advised him to the contrary, he said normalcy should be restored through civilian means and the army's involvement in the process should be to the minimum. "And even the Constitution does not permit that, sir," contended Gen. Abdullah Malik.

"Have you read the Constitution?" asked Mr. Bhutto, somewhat surprised.

"We take our oath of allegiance under the very same Constitution," replied Gen. Malik with a smile.

At this Mr. Bhutto picked up the intercom and asked for Hafeez Pirzada. "Where's he? Send him over!"

By the time Hafeez Pirzada showed up, the talk was revolving around the possibility of imposing a partial martial law in certain areas, with Gen. Malik constantly rejecting such a suggestion."

As Hafeez Pirzada got there, he forthwith gave his opinion. “This is hardly a problem,” he said, “we’ll summon the Assembly tomorrow and have as amendment made in the Constitution.”

Gen. Abdullah Malik again came up with his honest objection. “Sir,” he said, “the amendment will make matters worse and kick up a further row.”

“This is a political matter,” said the Prime Minister in a decisive manner, “leave it to me.”

“Right then, sir” said Gen. Malik, “better if you also consult the Army Chief in this regard.”

The meeting was over.

Setting back, Gen abdullah Malik narrated all that had happened to Gen. Zia – ul – Haq. He told him that he had been called over and most probably the Prime Minister would now talk to him on the subject.

After the enforcement of partial Martial Law, there started a string of meetings with the Chief of the Army Staff and the Crops Commanders. In most of these, both myself and Hafeez Pirzada were present. The fact is, that this partial Martial Law laid the way open for the promulgation of a full fledged Martial Law. The Constitution was amended the very next day and with that the generals started new ideas. They were justified in thinking that when it was they who had offer all the protection to the Government, then why not take over the reins of power! What locus standi does Mr. Bhutto enjoy when a large majority in the country is opposed to his authority? Personally, I feel Air Marshal Asghar Khan’s letter to the generals was also instrumental in influencing their minds. In addition, reports from intelligence sources had also been received by Mr. Bhutto about the close relations some PNA leaders had with some of the generals. This was conveyed by him to the Chief of Army Staff as well. At this the COAS vehemently protested, contending that with the Inter Services Intelligence Bureau amounted to an insult to the entire army. When he demanded that such a thing should forthwith he stopped, he Prime Minister assured him that it would be done. In fact he passed orders to the Directors Intelligence Bureau, Akram Sheikh to call an immediate halt to the surveillance of army generals. He wanted to satisfy Gen. Zia –ul – Haq at any cost. He fully believed him when he said that he would personally investigate about the links of some generals with the leaders of the PNA.

Perceiving the mood of the Chief of the Army Staff, the Prime Minister took some more steps of an immediate nature to calm him down. The very next day i.e. on 31st May, he removed Akraam Sheikh from his post and appointed his own Special Secretary, Rao Rashid, as the Director Intelligence Bureau in his

place. Akram Sheikh was then posted as Director F.I.A. relieving Mian Aslam Hayat Wattoo who was sent as an OSD to the Establishment Division.

With all these steps in quick succession, Mr. Bhutto wanted to assure the generals that he had full trust in them.

The Intelligence Bureau now completely gave up tracking the generals. This was something which confirmed to the bureaucracy that the fall of the Bhutto government was around the corner and that the army would soon be taking over power. As such those in key positions went to develop their relations with the generals and were all out to offer a welcome to their future rulers.

During a speech in the National Assembly on April 28th, when the Prime Minister made a mention of USA's interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan, his reliance, even then, was on the approval of the generals. However, by the end of May, things had completely gone out of his hands and the generals were getting a firmer grip on matters. To sum it up, the enforcement of partial Martial Law had completely tied up Mr. Bhutto.

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OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE

On the evening of April 28th, 1977, the Prime Minister made a very fiery speech in the National Assembly. It lasted for around one hour and forty – five minutes. By that time negotiations had already commenced with the PNA.

Before shedding any light on these talks, it would be more appropriate to say something about American interference in Pakistan's internal affairs vis – a – visa the speech made by Mr. Bhutto.

In this emotional address, the Prime Minister declared the crisis in the country to be the result of an international conspiracy. "The elephant is annoyed with me," he declared, "it has just not accepted our stand on the situation in Viet Nam and the Middle East. We supplied arms to the Arabs; we took a stand on acquiring an atomic plant keeping the national interest in view. At the moment foreign currency is floating around in the country; in Karachi a dollar is available for as low as six or seven rupees. Money is being showered upon the people to sound the azam from mosques; they are being paid for going to jails. This is not a conspiracy hatched by the PNA but it is an international conspiracy - - the blood – hounds are after me. Leaders of the PNA do not have the brains nor the ability to bring the agitation to this pitch - - this is all the doing of large scale international manoeevouring".

During the course of this speech, Mr. Bhutto referred to some past incidents as well. He said when the Viet Nam war was in progress and he then happened to be the Foreign Minister, the Americans had taken exception to Pakistan's stand. Demanding moral support against China, the Americans had said in the presence of Ayub Khan that as a small gesture Pakistan could export ping-pong balls and rackets to the States. Whereas Ayub Khan remained silent at this, Mr. Bhutto openly refused to do any such thing contending that it was a matter of principle.

Continuing Mr. Bhutto said: "The elephant has a sharp memory; this sin of mine was never condoned. The elephant had sharp differences with China whereas I improved my relations with that country - - that was another sin on my part. In the Middle East, I supported the Arabs, not orally or politically, but military. During Dr. Kissinger's visits to India, America declared that country to be the dominant one in the subcontinent, something which I refused to accept. When I called for an Islamic Summit, I was asked to postpone it for a month. I

agreed, only to be asked once again for one month's postponement when I convened it the second time. I complied once more. But when pressure was exerted upon me to postpone it for the third time, I wrote a detailed letter to King Faisal. Agreeing with me he agreed to calling the Summit in February," (It is worth mentioning that it was I who delivered this letter of Mr. Bhutto to King Faisal).

"After the Islamic Conference, Yasser Arafat addressed the UNO which granted recognition to PLO. It was we who were responsible for the patch – up between Greece and Turkey. Even Korea approached us for resolving its problem. All this was not to the liking of the elephant. My projecting the views of the Third World is also viewed by the elephant as something of a headache for it. However, the hounds became all the more active in my quest when I struck the deal regarding the atomic reprocessing plant with France. Kissinger came over and threatened me, then he went to France and made nasty Press comments. I was asked to discuss the deal with them. I told them I'll do that after your elections are over. Now when I was again asked about the discussion. I told them that we are presently having our own election. Till yesterday I remained quiet, but now I want the people to know that what is happening is a huge conspiracy - - not local, but international. No one has ever spoken of jamming the wheels in our country - - these are external ideas, these have been imported from outside. Those throughout demanding the enforcement of Shariat do not consider it now to be the main issue. The person inflaming the country in the name of Nizam – e – Mustafal, Mualana Maudoodi, now contends that it is not the real problem. All this makes their intention so obvious. The Martial Law enforced in Karachi, Hyderabad and Lahore is quite under the Constitution, emergency has been declared strictly under the provisions of the Constitution. Partial Martial Law is also in accordance with the Constitution and within the powers granted under emergency conditions. The previous Martial Law flouted the Constitution but the present one is within its dictates and completely in accordance with its provisions. It is we who will enforce Islamic laws in Pakistan; we have already imposed a ban on liquor and gambling. For the imposition of Shariat, let those in the PNA presents themselves before the council of Islamic Ideology; we'll send for scholars from other countries as well. It is written in the Constitution that within seven years all laws would be made in conformity with those laid down in the Quran and Sunnat. If that is the issue the PNA is concerned about, then we are ready to get over with this job within six months through their cooperation."

The most startling part of the Prime Minister's speech was where he disclosed that on 21st April two officials of the American Embassy were jubiliantly talking to each other over the phone, saying, "The party is over, the party is over; the man is a goner; the merchandise has gone."

At that moment Mr. Bhutto was trembling with emotion. His face was glowing red; his voice in a high pitch.

He continued, “Gentlemen, the party is not over and it will not be over till I complete my mission. I did not protest over this to the US government. Rather I gave dinner to the outgoing Ambassador. On the country the US Government complained to me that the people of Rawalpindi had raised slogans of “America murdabad”. But I had not asked them to do that. When people see so many dollars with the opposition they vent their feelings and protest. Some foreigners are predicting my downfall, but I have the capability of giving them a surprised them again. External forces are after my blood but I am not the one to be scared by conspiracies.”

It was for the first time that the Prime Minister had made a direct allegation regarding outside interface in Pakistan’s internal affairs. Hearing that, diplomats in the Visitors Gallery were spellbound, some appearing very uneasy in their seats.

However, he made graver charges about external interference, and in a much more composed manner, in the statement on oath he filed before the Lahore High Court in the Nusrat Bhutto case. This he forwarded from the Kot Lakhpat Jail, and its major part is based upon the speech he had delivered in the National Assembly on 28th April. All the same he made some further disclosure in this statement about the various conspiracies hatched by America to throw him out of power. In paragraph 106 of the document, he said;

“After my speech in the National Assembly, the America Charged Affaires lodged a protest with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs saying that issues discussed at the government level should not be brought out before the public as that makes talks at official levels rather difficult. This is what America said, but it never negated what I had alleged, nor repudiated it.”

In paragraph 107 of the same statement, Mr. Bhutto writes; “In August 1977, Mr. Kissinger threatened me in Lahore that if I do not change my stand on the reprocessing plant, I would be made an example of and come to a horrible and.”

In paragraph 108, he states: “At the suggestion of the American Secretary of State, I sent my Foreign Minister, Aziz Ahmed, to Paris for secret negotiations. He had a 50 – page document with him of circumstantial evidence of America’s involvement, but the American Foreign Minister hardly took interest in it. On the contrary after going through the document, he remarked. Discretion is the better part of valour. He advised us to bury the past and open a fresh chapter of future relations. The same night the locks of the rooms where Mr. Aziz Ahmed was staying were broken open and a thorough search conducted. However, the document in question was not in his room but in the safe custody of the Pakistan Embassy. As such those who had barged into the room could not lay their hands on anything.”

This is what Mr. Bhutto states in paragraph 109: “A short while after 5th July 1977, Aziz Ahmed gave a copy of all those documents to Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan with a request for a detailed study. If the Court deems it proper it may summon Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan (the present Chairman of the Senate) and asked him what all was in the documents pertaining to interference in Pakistan’s affairs.”

Further, in paragraph 110, he writes: “In June 1977, during the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference in Tripoli. Aziz Ahmed also distributed this documentary proof among all the delegates, on the basis of which the Conference passed a resolution condemning external interference in Pakistan’s internal affairs.”

It was not without ample reason or proof that Mr. Bhutto made such strong allegations of foreign interference. Yet, whether it be America or some other country. It cannot create adverse conditions in our country. It is we ourselves who create them, and America only uses them for its own advantage. Consequently, America happily cashed upon the turmoil which brewed up following the 7th March elections.

There is hardly any doubt that America was hostile towards Pakistan and its government of the time. This trends started during the American presidential elections when Carter was facing Ford. At that time Mr. Bhutto had sent for the American Ambassador and told him he was praying for the success of Gerald Ford and would be issuing similar statements at the official level as well so that they help mould American public opinion in his favour. During those days George West happened to be the US Ambassador in Pakistan.

Later, Mr. Bhutto actually issued statements of the effect that America’s allies like Pakistan feel reassured to see the Republican Party and President Ford in the White House and if, God forbid, he loses in the election it would cause great disappointment in the region and damage the United States’ image in the world.

Contrary to Mr. Bhutto’s expectations, Jimmy Carter won the elections. Besides the traditional leaning of the Democrats towards India. Carter also nursed a personal grudge against Mr. Bhutto for statements he had issued. Apart from pressure from the Israelis, it was this very personal annoyance with Mr. Bhutto which was behind Jimmy Carter’s strong objection to an atomic reprocessing plant, a matter which he linked with his own prestige.

During the Arab – Israel war, Mr. Bhutto provided military support to Egypt and Syria. Besides the Air Force, Pakistan’s Army also played a leading role against Israel. Naturally that went to inflame Kissinger, a bigoted Jew himself. The Americans knew that if Pakistan succeeds in getting the reproceesing plant

and makes an atomic bomb it could well be used against Israel also. Against this background it is not difficult to understand the reasons for America's antagonism towards Mr. Bhutto.

At that time Gen. Tikka Khan was still heading the Army, and there were still about six months for him to retire. One Col. Ballatay came to be posted as the Military Attache in the US Embassy. He was a very important and well – informed person. Playing golf one evening with a military officers in Peshawar, he said, "Your next Chief of the Army Staff will be Gen. Zia – ul – Haq.

Those days the top three names floating around for the post were of Gen. Sharif, Gen. Majid Malik and Gen. Izzat Buksh Awan, and those in the Services normally talked about them. No one even dreamed of the name of Gen. Zia – ul – Haq. As such when Col. Ballatay mentioned his name the officers, who happened to be from the Air Force, was greatly surprised. He went and told Air Marshal Zulfiqar Khan about it. He just laughed it away and did not give the news any importance. However, six months later, the very name mentioned by Col. Ballatay was splashed around the world and Gen. Zia – ul – Haq became Pakistan's Chief of the Army Staff, knocking out several Generals senior to him.

Col. Ballatay retired from services during Gen. Zia – ul – Haq's tenure of power. Later, when he came to Pakistan in 1985 on a private visit. Gen. Zia – ul – Haq threw a party for him at the President's House.

On the 21st May 1977, when the ground was being prepared on the one hand for negotiations between the Government and the PNA, and on the other the anti – Government agitation was in full fury, a former Ambassador of USA. Joseph Farland, suddenly came to Pakistan on a visit. This gentleman had also been seen shutting between Dhaka and Karachi and other places for over a fortnight during the agonising days when Bangladesh was coming into being. The Government had confirmed information that he held a very important position in the CIA. This man held secret meetings with some Pakistani leaders in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi. This was also well with in the knowledge of the Government. The full record of this gentleman's activities was in the custody of Mr. Aziz Ahmed which went to confirm the allegations made by Mr. Bhutto.

On 24th May, America transferred its Ambassador in Pakistan. Before he left, the Chief of the Army Staff hosted a farewell party for him in the Army House. For this he neither took permission from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor from the Prime Minister. (At least this is what Mr. Bhutto told us himself. Even if he had hidden the fact from us, then what else can one say than that he had become so weak and helpless that it was no more within his power even to refuse permission for the feast to his own Chief of the Army Staff).

I do not remember the exact date of this farewell party, but it was somewhere close to the date of the over – throw of the civilian government.

Those days, probably, our negotiations with the PNA were in progress, and I remember seeing the Army House glowing with lights while on my way back from one meeting.

From all these incidents it is abundantly clear that America was in the mood of taking full advantage, at any cost, from the unfortunate conditions prevailing in the country against Prime Minister Bhutto. In addition to its links with some of the political leaders. America also enjoyed influence among the top brass of the army.

It is a major tragedy of the present days that the daughter of the Bhutto for whose ouster from power America had spread a huge net, does not deem it proper to utter even a single word of condemnation about America's aggression against Libya. Rather, before returning to Pakistan, she goes round Washington and New York to seek their blessing. She considers America to be her friend and makes others believe so at a time when Washington Post carries an article saying, "….. For the first time America has made an experiment of making a popular leader unpopular and has met with cent per cent success….. "

Alas, as the poet says, the merchandise carried by the caravan has been lost: And what a pity, the realisation of this loss has also vanished.

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CHAPTER 9

REPROCESSING PLANT - - THE INSIDE STORY

To justified interference in Pakistan's internal affairs and, at the instigation of Israel, to portry Prime Minister Bhutto as another Hitler and a threat to world peace, the main recourse of America was on his deal with France for the procurement of an atomic reprocessing plant.

In this regard very few of the real facts have come to surface, and all that has gone round are mostly concocted stories. Moreover, emotional sloganeering has also played quite some part in this matter with his astute enemies and obtuse friends making every effort to drown his real achievement in a storm of idle talk.

In this chapter I shall try to bring the real facts, for the first time, to the notice of the world - - the facts which have all along remained hidden. Whatever the merits or demerits of Bhutto, the fact remains that he was madly involved in an effort to make Pakistan a world power and give it a prominent position in the international field. And so far as making Pakistan an atomic power is concerned, it was a very old dream of his. In 1965, when he was declared: "if India makes an atom bomb then, even if we have to feed on grass and leaves - - or even if we have to starve - - we shall also produce an atom bomb as we would be left with no other alternative. The answer to an atom bomb can only be an atom bomb."

Finally, on 18th May, 1974, India came up with its first atomic explosion. Whatever the effects of this on the general public in Pakistan, it assumed the shape of a direct challenge to Prime Minister Bhutto. People naturally now looked towards him for a worthwhile reply. However, his problem was that due to several international squabbles he could not make public what more he intended to do. Through his statement and speeches he tired to keep high the morale of the people. In this connection he also gave me special instructions to take certain steps in my capacity as the party's Secretary Information & Broadcasting. Besides, he reacted sharply on the floor of the National Assembly and candidly said that henceforth we can also not be prevented from taking a similar step.

Instructing me to initiate a propaganda campaign against India on an International level, and on scientific lines, he himself quietly got busy to further the negotiations which he had started in 1973 with a French firm called S.G.N.

and settle conditions under which it would supply a reprocessing plant to Pakistan.

Mr. Bhutto had a deep insight into international affairs and hence it could not ever be imagined that he was unaware of India's forthcoming atomic explosion. He had all the latest information about it and was fully aware how and at what cost India had succeeded in its venture. Nevertheless, after the atomic blast by India, he gave a good dressing down to some of those leading scientists of the country who were claiming that it was child's play for them to make an atomic explosion similar to that of India.

All though the negotiations with the French firm, the French Government was also an equal party. During the three years that the negotiations continued the Prime Minister had given all assurance to the French Government, as well as to the international organisation monitoring atomic safeguards - - the IAEA. He had accepted all the conditions laid down by them in toto. He assured them that the reprocessing plant would only be used to produce for industrial purposes.

However, after giving the fullest assurances, Mr. Bhutto managed to score a point. There was not a single clause in the agreement forbidding Pakistan from setting up a similar plant through its own resources and its own scientists, nor that such a plant would be subject to the control and inspection of any international agency. Mr. Bhutto had gone so far in accepting all the controls of the international safeguarding agency that no one could ever dream that Pakistan would be able to produce an atom bomb with the reprocessing plant being produced from France.

It was his Scientific Adviser, Dr. Abdus Salam, and the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. Mr. Munir Ahmed Khan, who had put the idea of the purchase of a reprocessing plant in his mind. But even though fully aware of the intricacies of every issue, he did not have a full grasp over matters relating to nuclear technology. Moreover, engrossed as he was in tacking various internal and external problems, he could not personally study the various aspects of the project. As such he left the entire responsibility in this connection with the Pakistan Science Foundation and the Atomic Energy Commission confining himself to taking care of its political and economic aspects. The biggest problem was the procurement of 300 million dollars for the project. For that he approached the Muslim world, particularly the Gulf States and Arab countries loaded with petro dollars. The response was encouraging, especially from Libya, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Iraq who offered every kind of financial assistance. He was already held in high esteem in Arab quarters for the Pakistani military assistance which had given a crushing blow to the Israeli army during the Arab – Israel war. Consequently, the Arab heads of state were fully confident that an atomic bomb with Pakistan would be a guarantee for their own safety in case of Israel aggression.

On his part, Mr. Bhutto was not prepared to divulge anything nor to utter a single word on the issue; it was only a few persons in the country who had any knowledge of his actual programme. However, when he noticed the growing apprehensions among some members of the Assembly, besides minister and senior officials, he one day took them into confidence. Calling a meeting he spoke in a meaningful tone: “We have to acquire this technology at any cost,” he said, “the international guarantees will be confined to only this single plant. I cannot believe that our scientists and technical personnel would be so inept that they would not be able to produce a similar plant with their own efforts and skill after having seen and understood one technology. Consequently we shall not be bound by any international checks for such a plant.”

The Prime Minister very well knew that he was embarking upon a lengthy and time – consuming project, yet he was positive that with the help of his Arab friends he would see it accomplished during his own tenure. In this connection it was only I who was sent almost four times to negotiate with the late King Faisal. So far as contact with other countries was concerned, several others were deputed to carry out his instruction, although not fully aware of their impact. These included Agha Shahi, Aziz Ahmed A.G.N Kazi, Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Mnuir Ahmed. However, when in 1974 India exploded it first nuclear device in Rajasthan, the entire scenario was changed.

There was another dramatic happening in June or July 1974 when the Prime Minister received a letter from Holland written by a Pakistani patriot who had received his doctorate in mettalurgy. This was Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan. He informed him that although he was an expert in waste products, and had written several research articles and authored a book of international renown, the inefficient bosses of Pakistan Steel Mills were not deeming it fit to utilities his potentialities and had not even sent an adequate reply to his offer. Dr. Qadeer further informed that he was fully proficient in the intricate and complex field of enriched uranium production, and was currently working in the town of Almelo in Holland on a project, called Urenco, under F.D.O. The purpose of the project, he explained, was to enrich uranium through the centrifuge system and that the plant had been in operation for the last 20 years, being financed jointly by Britain, Holland and Germany and manned by renowned scientists. Dr. Qadeer further said that he could be an asset to the Pakistan Steel Mills but no positive response was forthcoming to his overtures from that quarter.

This letter create an upheaval in the mind of the Prime Minister. Leaving all things aside, he forthwith assessed the potential of Dr. Qadeer because of his association with the plant at Almelo and his expertise in enriching uranium. Through a covert channel he sent a message to him to take leave and come over to meet him in Pakistan. At the same time Mr. Bhutto set the Pakistan Secret Service and relevant embassies into action to collect all possible information about the Almelo plant.

Receiving fuller and detailed information, Mr. Bhutto could very clearly visualise the situation and see how things stood. He also had enquiries made about the person of Dr. Qadeer in the light of which he was convinced that he was the one who could help fulfil his dream of making Pakistan an atomic power in the shortest possible time. Consequently, he sent a message to him that he should seek leave in the normal manner without arousing any kind of suspicion, come over to Pakistan and contact his Military Secretary, Brig. Imtiaz.

Dr. Qadeer arrived in Karachi in December 1974 together with his wife and daughters. Mr. Bhutto immediately called him over to Islamabad and told him to forget about making steel products and instead chalk out a plan for going in for the enrichment of uranium.

Those days Mr. Bhutto also had quite some trust in Munir Ahmed Khan and hence directed him to meet Dr. Qadeer and have his suggestions implemented. Th two met and after making Munir Ahmed Khan aware of the correct and latest method of acquiring nuclear technology, Dr. Qadeer left for Karachi. Before leaving, he informed Mr. Bhutto that he had explained to Munir Ahmed Khan the entire work to be undertaken.

After some time, Dr. Qadeer returned to his job in Holland, but fully fired with a mission. By virtue of having mostery over several languages he was the coordinator of the reports complied by the Dutch. British and German scientists and, as such, was aware of every minute detail of the centrifuge system installation. Before leaving he had also pointed out to Mr. Bhutto all the drawbacks associated with the purchase of a reprocessing plant because that while elephant costing 300 million dollars would take a minimum of 20 years to be installed. In fact before going in for a reprocessing plant Pakistan needed three other basic plants to achieve its purpose. These were, a) Production reactor which could produce plutonium, b) Fuel – producing reactor and, c) Production plant for heavy water. It was only afterwards that the reprocessing plant could be of any use for helping to produce an atom bomb. And then, most important of all was that these plants should be beyond the inspection of the international agency for control of atomic power. That was something hardly possible as we were dependent for all our requirements on the Western countries. Expect for KANUPP, Pakistan had no other power reactor and neither did it have any reserve of fuel for reprocessing. Taking advantage of his eagerness, Mr. Bhutto's scientific advisers had completely duped him by feeding him with totally incorrect and partial information. They now stood exposed.

Mr. Bhutto had advanced so far with regard to the agreement with France that it was now extremely difficult to react. He was on the horns of a dilemma. Cancelling the agreement would mean a loss of the collosal amount spent in pursuing the deal, besides being made liable to pay through the teeth as compensation for backing out, something which was beyond the economic

capability of Pakistan. As things stood, the international prices of oil had sky – rocketed, the country's graph of GNP was on the decline, flood and earthquakes were causing havoc, the crop output was dwindling, all contributing to the economic problems of the country. In such a situation it was extremely difficult for the Prime Minister to decide whether to go ahead with the purchase of the 300 million dollars worth of white elephant or to rescind the agreement for which he had negotiated for three years and spent thousands of dollars on the expenses of the negotiating teams he had been sending to France.

Ultimately he took an extremely difficult and bold decision - - a decision which only a person with nerves as strong as his could take. But there were some other factors as well which prompted him to arrive at that decision, the most significant of these being the arrival of Dr. Qadeer in December 1975. Landing at Karachi he had only three large boxes as his luggage, containing nothing beyond his personal notes scribbled from memory.

The Prime Minister invited him over to Islamabad. When he got there, Mr. Bhutto had already left for Larkhana with the Shah of Iran. However, he left instructions for Munir Ahmed Khan to show Dr. Qadeer all the work that had been carried out on his instructions during his absence of one year and how it was progressing. However, Dr. Qadeer was completely dissatisfied with what he saw as things stood where he had left them. To look after the project envisaged by dr. Qadeer, an M.Sc. Electrical Engineer had been deputed who did not have the capability of understanding the process of enriching uranium.

On return to Islamabad, Prime Minister Bhutto sent for Dr. Qadeer and asked for his report. Now what was there for Dr. Qadeer to report? Utterly disgusted, he had decided to return to Holland as he considered himself totally helpless in the network of bureaucracy. It was clear to him that Mr. Bhutto's advisers and bureaucrats had all along been wasting public money by continuously furnishing incorrect information to him vis a vis nuclear technology.

Mr. Bhutto listened intently to all Dr. Qadeer had to say, but asked him to wait by staying on for a few days more in Pakistan.

It was at the stage that Mr. Bhutto took me into confidence in connection with the whole issue. He explained everything, and asked for my opinion. Evidently I was furious hearing all that, especially at the way our bureaucracy was out to lose a national asset and was putting impediments in the way of a patriot who was offering his capabilities for utilisation in the national interest. I straight away advised the Prime Minister to retain Dr. Qadeer at any cost and in order to obtain full benefit from his talent, a completely independent set – up be established headed by none other but himself. Further, the technical personnel for such an organisation be drawn from the army instead of from civilians or bureaucrats.

The Prime Minister probably liked my suggestion, for the very next day he sent for Dr. Qadeer and told him that he had already taken the decision to set up an autonomous organisation to be headed by him which would not be subjected to any check from any quarter and that he could himself select his required assistance and staff from among the army personnel, if he so desired. In the alternative, he could trust the discretion of the Prime Minister with regard to selection of those to assist him.

Dr. Qadeer asked the Prime Minister for time to consult his wife as only then would he be able to say whether he was accepting the offer or not. At that, Mr. Bhutto ordered him, rather affectionately, not to take more than one hour for the consultation.

It was exactly after one hour that Dr. Qadeer rang up the Prime Minister to inform that he was not returning to Holland and would stay on to set up the plant for enrichment of uranium. Hearing that I saw a flash of happiness on his face. Banging his fist on the table in his usual style he said, "I will see the Hindu bastards now!"

The glee of the Prime Minister at the time was worth watching.

More often than not Mr. Bhutto's decisions were multifaceted. On several occasions it was felt that he had discarded all the suggestions and advice of his friends and taken quite a different decision. However, later when the results of such decisions came to fore, we were all left aghast. And so it happened in this case as well. Contrary to what had been agreed upon between the two of us, he suddenly ordered the appointment of Dr. Qadeer as Advisor to the Atomic Energy Commission with the directions that he should guide it and set up the plant.

Dr. Qadeer spent a few weeks in that organisation but when he saw that its working was on the pattern of the PWD, and that in such a set – up he would not be able to deliver the goods for which he had been commissioned, he conveyed his feeling to the Prime Minister's Military Secretary. He clearly told him that he could not work in those conditions. When this was conveyed to the Prime Minister he asked Brig. Imtiaz (his military Secretary) to confirm from Brig. (now Lt. Gen.) Zahid Ali Akbar if all the allegations made by Dr. Qadeer were correct. Brig. Zahid Ali Akbar was incharge of the Crops of Engineer's team, which had been placed at the disposal of Dr. Qadeer at his request and was responsible for the civil works.

When Imtiaz checked up with Zahid Ali Akbar he found that there was complete confusion, on work was being carried out, and that the Prime Minister was being duped. Consequently Dr. Qadeer was thinking of going back.

Mr. Bhutto was furious when he heard that. He sent for Dr. Qadeer and got the first hand account from him. He told him plainly that his anxiety for acquiring nuclear technology was being exploited and he was being fed with wrong information.

The Prime Minister pacified Dr. Qadeer and sent him off. The same evening he summoned me to the P.M.'s House. Explaining the entire situation he said, "Maulana, I don't want to miss such a golden chance. This man (Dr. Qadeer) is far too valuable; find some way out."

I suggested that he take the Secretary General Finance, A.G.N. Kazi, Foreign Secretary, Agha Shahi, Aziz Ahmed and Ghulam Ishaq Khan into confidence and introduce Dr. Qadeer to them. And so this was done.

Mr. Bhutto was extremely annoyed for he felt that he had been made to cut a sorry figure before the entire nation. In a meeting at Lahore where Agha Shahi and Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan (present Chairman, Agricultural Research Council), besides Brig. Imtiaz, were also present, Mr. Bhutto used very strong words - - words which I cannot reproduce. Gauging his fury, Brig, Imtiaz suggested that Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan be appointed Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. However, since he did not happen to be a nuclear scientist it was decided to hand over reins of the Commission to some capable administrator. For that Mr. Bhutto suggest the name of Gen. Rahimuddin Khan (present Chairman, joint Chiefs of Staff Committee) and Gen. Saeed Qadir (present Senator). Different suggestions kept coming up with mine being that the Kahuta Project should be made a completely separate entity and utmost secrecy be maintained about it. The same suggestion later came up from A.G.N> kazi, Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Agha Shahi.

I was present when Military Secretary Imtiaz rang up in July 1976 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to inform Mr. Bhutto of the decisions taken. He straightaway agreed to all the suggestions put forward, including Dr. Qadeer's demand that he will have complete autonomy in his work in the research laboratories. At the same time Ghulam Ishaq Khan and A.G.N. Kazi assured the availability of finance at all times. Consequently, the Kahuta Research Laboratories were established in July 1976 with Dr. Qadeer making a commitment that within seven years he would bring Pakistan at par with world powers in the field of atomic energy.

Mr. Bhutto had full trust in Dr. Qadeer. As such, on our advice, he allowed the Atomic Energy Commission to keep functioning as a show piece leaving the actual work of nuclear energisation to Dr. Qadeer. Further, to provide him all the requisite facilities and logistic support, a body named Central Works Organisation was created under the stewardship of Lt. Gen. Zahid Ali Akbar and Maj. Gen. Anis Ali Syed. In this connection the role of Ghulam Ishaq Khan is significant for he never allowed the lack of funds to come in the way.

When Kissinger arrived in Pakistan on 8th August 1976, the only brief he carried was about the agreement to purchase a reprocessing plant from France and which Carter, only out of spite for Mr. Bhutto, was playing up as an international problem and trying to prove Bhutto to be a threat to world peace. This was despite the fact that the very well knew that the reprocessing plant was hardly of any uses to Pakistan. In fact it was utterly useless so far as any military option was concerned.

When Kissinger went to the extent of threatening Prime Minister Bhutto with making him a ghastly example of a horrible end, he took that extremely difficult and painful decision to which I have referred earlier.

The Prime Minister was at the zenith of his self – confidence and he soon contrived the plot of a lengthy drama to wriggle out of the agreement to purchase a reprocessing plant. The main characters of this drama were to be Carter and Kissinger.

Those days some of those in the know of things had expressed opposition to the decision of purchasing a reprocessing plant, more so because it was of no value so far as a military option was concerned, and were demanding that the agreement be rescinded. At the forefront of this campaign were such people as the weekly "Akhbar – I – Jehan's" columnist. Habibur Rehman, and some other attached to the Pakistan Economist. In fact Mr. Bhutto himself wanted that in order to keep the doings of the Kahuta Research Laboratories hidden from everyone, world attention should be diverted to the purchase of a reprocessing plant and such a firm stand taken on the non – existent issue that America itself was forced to use its influence upon France and make it cancel the agreement. That way, instead of Pakistan having to pay any compensation for backing out, it would be France which would have to open its coffers.

After having been hooked in to sign the agreement Mr. Bhutto was now thinking of ways to get out of it. As such he did let go of any opportunity to give a fillip to the objections being raised against it all over the world and to further flare up the United States. At the same time, the Americans left no stone unturned to threaten Pakistan and even went to the extent of cancelling an agreement on 2nd June under which they were to supply 110 fighter aircraft to Pakistan.

On 19 June 1977, the New York Times carried the news that France had cancelled the agreement to supply the reprocessing plant to Pakistan, although the formal announcement to this effect was made in June 1978 when Mr. Bhutto had been ousted from power. The meeting which Mr. Bhutto had referred to in his statement on oath before the High Court had taken place on 31st May 1977 and the same night the locks of Mr. Aziz Ahmed's room had been broken open. At this Mr. Bhutto had violently protested to Carter over the phone and even gone

to the extent of saying that Pakistan still stood by the agreement to purchase the reprocessing plant.

After this incident the person of Mr. Bhutto became a specific target of a virulent attack by Carter, little knowing how artfully Mr. Bhutto was using him for his specific purpose. In fact he surpassed all limits to make a buffoon of Mr. Carter. On the other side, Carter afflicted by his rustiic background, almost vowed possible, the proof of which appeared in The Guardian on 27 April, 1977. The article made out that it was very much possible that the opposition parties in Pakistan are receiving foreign aid. Terming Tehrik – I – Istiqlal and the Muslim League as parties inclined towards capitalism, the writer said that American support to the opposition was proved when it refused to sell tear gas shells to Pakistan. An almost similar article also appeared in The Washington Post.

Despite all this, the Tehran Journal in its issue of May 2 strongly criticised BBC for giving vent to hostile propaganda against Pakistan, and thus becoming gully of interference in its internal affairs. The Journal openly alleged that BBC was doing all that at the behest of America.

Mr. Bhutto was now waging a war on four fronts. On one side he was prodding Carter to increase his pressure on France, and on the other he was against the opposition parties within the country whom he was trying to keep in check, and the fourth was against the Generals whom he was trying to humour through frequent meetings. At the same time he was probing all the world markets through the Central Works Organisation to procure the required equipment and parts needed for the Kahuta Research Laboratories. All this was in no way an easy task - - for a lone person to be giving equal attention to all these issues is something unimaginable.

Acquiring an atomic bomb was an obsession with Mr. Bhutto. However, where it is easy to issue statements about the manufacture of such a bomb, it is extremely difficult to actually produce one. In 1945, the bombs dropped by America over Hiroshima and Nagasaki to cause that havoc were produced from an atom of natural plutonium, technically known as UB239, after putting it through a reprocessing plant. India used putting the same techniques for its atomic explosion in 1974. However, with further advancement of science this process had evidently become redundant, and things were far difficult from what they were in 1945. Immediately after the end of the second World War, America had initiated research at the Virginia University for the production of a nuclear bomb through methods - - one, gas diffusion, and the other, the centrifuge. This second method was discarded many a time by the America and work stopped on it. However, it was taken up again in an effort to maintain their superiority over the Communist Block.

In 1945, Britain, Germany and Holland jointly started work on this method and set up a covert plant for the purpose at Almelo, investing millions of dollars

and engaging thousand of scientists. As soon as the Americans got a hint of this project, they started exerting pressure on these friendly countries to stop it. Even up to the 10th of March 1961 they kept insisting upon them to disband their Urenco Project, but they persisted with their work. America itself succeed only in 1979 to enrich uranium through the centrifuge method when it setup a plant at Yartsmouth. However, this plant was to be fully operational by 1989.

It may be clarified that success in the enrichment of uranium means the direct manufacture of a nuclear bomb without recourse to heavy water or the need to install a reactor or to purchase a reprocessing plant. When Mr. Bhutto was getting what he wanted through the efforts of cheap indigenous scientists and engineers, why did he need to go in for that fabulously costly reprocessing plant and ruin the economy of the country? He now considered that plant to be an unwarranted and ruinous burden on national resources.

During Cabinet meetings there was never any mention of Dr. Qadeer or the Kahuta Plant. This project was known only to limited few, although I cannot say that for certain. Could be that America got some scent of it and Mr. Bhutto did not succeed in keeping their attention confined only to the reprocessing plant. However, this appears rather unlikely. But it is also a fact that Mr. Bhutto had doubts about his own advisers and some of his cabinet members regarding their contacts with the Americans. As such there was more than one reason why America was out to oust Mr. Bhutto from power. However the climax was reached when Mr. Bhutto vehemently expounded his determination to purchase the reprocessing plant in a speech in the National Assembly on June 10. That was something which America just could not tolerate. The name of Dr. Qadeer in connection with the centrifuge system plant at Kahuta and Sihala came to the forefront much later, almost around 1982 when Pakistan had achieved success in that direction. I do not believe that America was in the know of it in 1976, although the possibility does exit, despite the fact that Prime Minister Bhutto had fully succeeded in keeping America attention hinged on the reprocessing plant.

Mr. Bhutto was so particular about secrecy for Dr. Qadeer and the Kahuta Research Laboratories that later, while offering every kind of argument in his defence before the Supreme Court, he only mentioned the reprocessing plant as the basis of his animosity with the United State and never mentioned a word about the Laboratories or about Dr. Qadeer. However, Some doubt arises at this point as the Americans could not be after blood of Mr. Bhutto only because of the reprocessing plant, more so when they knew that it was useless for Pakistan so far as a military option was concerned. The way America launched an all – out attack on Mr. Bhutto confirms the doubt that it had somehow got information of what was going on at the Kahuta Plant. All the same, nothing can be said with certainly especially now when Pakistan has given a practical shape to the dream of Mr. Bhutto and America has not been able to make it deviate from its path despite every possible intrigue. Whatever it may be, it remains no longer necessary to probe into the matter.

On Saturday, 18 June, Prime Minister Bhutto left for a visit to Saudi Arabia from where, after an emergent meeting with King Khalid. He had to proceed the same day to Libya. Accompanying him were Aziz Ahmed, Agha Shahi, Afzal Saeed, Masood Nabi Nur, A.A. Farroq, Mehdi Masud and some other officials. The composition of the delegation was to give the Americans the impression that his visit was in connection with the purchase of the reprocessing plant, as his going out of country in the midst of internal turmoil and crucial negotiations with the opposition was otherwise incomprehensible. His absence from the country at that juncture caused a break in the negotiations and evoked strong criticism from Maulana Mufti Mahmud who said in a statement in Islamabad on Monday, June, 20, that Mr. Bhutto should not have left the country without consulting the National Alliance. He said that Mr. Bhutto had told him that he was only going as far as Larkhana whereas he had landed up in Abu Dhabi.

How could Mualana Mufti Mahmud know that despite being completely fatigued, why Mr. Bhutto had not preferred some rest in Larkhana and gone rushing abroad, and why be said in an interview with Abu Dhabi TV that Pakistan would procure a reprocessing plant against all odds and at the same time suggested the convening of the third Islamic Summit Conference. During this interview the most important point that he brought up, and which could make the Americans raise their eyebrows, was his emphasis on the need to have a joint defence pact of the Islamic countries. The late Mufti Mahmud could never even imagine how forcefully Mr. Bhutto was matching his wits with the Americans, especially with Carter. The way Mr. Bhutto was going about was enough to convince Jimmy Carter that Mr. Bhutto would succeed in procuring the reprocessing plant with the help of the Islamic countries - - rather, he would be able to exert influence on France for the purpose through these countries. He further felt that Mr. Bhutto might be able to procure all the other accessories as well through the same connection.

On June 22, the Prime Minister suddenly landed in Kabul from Tehran, together with his delegation, and made a statement that France is still prepared to honour its commitment.

Such statement outside the country made America all the more furious. That was exactly what Mr. Bhutto desired as the main problem he was facing those days was to keep the installations of the Kahuta Research Laboratories and the ‘actual work’ being carried out there in concealed from the eyes of the world, and at the same time wriggle out of the agreement to purchase a reprocessing plant from France. Although his dream came true only after his death, and he is today not among us to see it fulfilled, yet his efforts in this regard shall remain unforgettable, especially the way he contrived to make amends for the original mistake by hatching a plot which completely duped the world powers. It is a feat which only Mr. Bhutto could have accomplished.

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CHAPTER 10

YAHYA BAKHTIAR'S AGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF MARTIAL LAW

When partial Martial Law was imposed on the cities of Karachi and Hyderabad and Summary Military Courts established, Malik Ghulam Jilalni filed a writ petition in the Lahore High Court challenging the action. In this connection the Advocate General gave arguments before a full bench of the Court on 18th May 1977 defending the government decision. He contended that since the army had been called in aid of the civil government the High Court was debarred from entertaining a petition pertaining of Martial Law.

Later, on 28 May, giving further arguments before the Lahore High Court, Attorney General Yahya Bakhtiar said that Martial Law had been imposed to save the country.

In its judgement given on Thursday, 2 June, the High Court contended that there was no scope in the Constitution for the imposition of Martial Law and that citizens cannot be tried in military courts under the Army Act. This was the judgement of the Full Bench comprising Justices Aslam Riaz Hussain, Karam Ilahi Chauhan, Shabbir Hussain Qadri, Zakiuddin Pal and Dr. Javed Iqbal.

In his argument Attorney General Yahya Bakhtair has contended that was a proviso to Article 245 of the Constitution under which the army could be summoned in aid of the civil government. However basing its decision on the arguments he had proffered earlier, the High Court stated in the judgement that the Attorney General had used the word 'Martial Law ' which had been imposed to help the civil government. That was, as I have stated above, exactly the line of argument followed by Mr. Yahya Bakhtair justifying the imposition of Martial Law. As such the High Court had caught him on his own words.

Hearing the judgement, Yahya Bakhtair declared that the Federal Government would prefer an appeal against it in the Supreme Court. And this was done. However, the Supreme Court did not accept his request to issue a stay order against the judgement of the Lahore High Court. Brohi and Shariuddin Peerzada were engaged by the court as amicus curiae counsel of the Court.

June 6 was fixed be the Supreme Court as the date of hearing. On that day, giving his argument in support of the appeal, Yahya Bakhtair contended that

there were contradictions in the judgement of the High Court. It was the same day that, as a protest against the arguments given by him in favour of Martial Law, the advocates of Rawalpindi removed his photograph from the Bar Room, with the Secretary of PNA's Legal Committee, Chaudhry Ismail, coming up with the demand that consequent upon the judgment of the Lahore High Court, the Government should lift Martial Law from Karachi and Hyderabad. As such it was announced in a Press conference in the Prime Minister House on June 7, that the limited Martial Law had been lifted from the two cities. Consequently, 12,900 prisoners got their release that day.

Although the Federal Government had announced the withdrawal of its decision yet it is indeed amusing that on the same day, June 7, Yahya Bakhtiar was saying during his arguments before the Supreme Court that "civil courts have no jurisdiction over all types of cases".

This amounted to further antagonising the judiciary which was already sore because of the 5TH Amendment. It particularly nursed a grudge against Yahya Bakhtiar. The result was that not only later led to justifying the imposition of Martial Law but also must have played a significant role when Mr. Bhutto's trial opened for the murder of AHMED Raza Kasuri's father and Yahya Bakhtiar appeared at the head of the panel of lawyers defending him. At that time his haughtiness during the days of power must have been constantly coming to the minds of the judges.

Elucidating further, Yahya Bakhtiar argued before the full bench of the Supreme Court comprising seven judges, that "even civilians can be tired by military courts, and the present Martial Law has been imposed to control the Law and order situation so that force can be met with force. As such all the actions of the army are completely within the purview of law."

These were the very arguments that came to the help of the General on the night of 5 July, 1977. It is as our own Attorney General was paving the constitutional way for them to achieve their ambition!

An appeal against Martial Law was also filed in the Sindh High Court, the decision on which was identical to the one already given by the Lahore High Court. All the same, when the Supreme Court again held a hearing on 9 June, Yahya Bakhtiar came up with the announcement that an appeal will also be filed against the judgement of the Sindh High Court.

In its judgement, the Sindh High Court had stated that the army was not aiding the civil government; rather it was clear imposition of Martial Law for which there was no scope in the Constitution. On a query from Chief Justice Yaqub Ali Khan about the stand of the government now that Martial Law had been lifted, Yahya Bakhtiar said that the hearing must continue as the role of the army under Article 245 needed to be defined, and in case negotiations broke down and an

agitation was launched, the army would have to play its part more effectively. He added, that the situation being mot unsatisfactory, a verdict of the Supreme Court was essential.

You can now judge for yourself what happier invitation could there be for the Generals?! Where we were sweating for the success of negotiation, Yahya Bakhtiar was going all out to sabotage the judgement of two High Courts blocking the way of Martial Law. On top of it he was insisting that conditions in the country were most unsatisfactory!

During the third hearing on 9 June, when Chief Justice Yaqub Ali Khan asked about the government's stand following the lifting of the limited Martial Law, it was the most opportune moment to allow the judgement of the two High Courts to stand and no further argument should have been better if the judgement of the Punjab and Sindh High Courts had been given due importance and adequately publicised to keep the Generals under legal and moral pressure making it difficult for them to launch Operation Fair play on the night of 5 July.

The Supreme Court had adjourned the hearing of the appeal against the judgement of the Lahore High Court up to 4 July, but the Generals probably got an inkling as to what the judgement would be. They, therefore, decided to cash in on all the arguments put forward by Yahya Bakhtiar up to that time in favour of Martial Law and take action before the Supreme Court also delivered a judgement against it. In his speech in the National Assembly, the argument given by Mr. Bhutto himself in favour of Martial Law still left some scope for discussion, besides being politically oriented, but what Yahya Bakhtiar did was to provide constitutional justification for the imposition of Martial Law through his legal arguments. The Generals would have been utter fools not to take advantage of that.

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CHAPTER 11

PROGRESS TOWARDS NEGOTIATIONS AND P.N.A.'S FORMULA FOR CONCILIATION

On 30 April, the PNA decided to hold a long march in Rawalpindi. It was to be led by Pir Sahib of Pagara Sharif who was then heading the Alliance in the absence of other detained leaders. The city, therefore, became the focus of attention of the entire country. PNA had made arrangements to transport their workers from all over to take part in the long march which was to end at the Prime Minister's House. However, the plan did not materialise and the 'long march' ended up only as a short one. Instead, the same afternoon an impromptu 'long march' led by Mr. Bhutto himself, was seen on the roads. He surprised everyone by suddenly appearing in the city, riding an open jeep. The very sight of him electrified people, especially his party workers. They thronged around his vehicle and followed it all over.

Addressing a huge crowed in front of the American Centre, the Prime Minister waved before them a letter received from American Foreign Minister Cyrus Vance in which he had expressed his government's displeasure at the speech he had delivered in the National Assembly on 28 April. Mr. Bhutto quoted his words: "You should have refrained from levelling open allegations as that can only lead to worsening of relations."

PNA's long march fizzled out badly. Where the local administration was partially responsible for that, it was also because of the Pir Sahib's detention in Hotel intercontinental suites Nos. 601 $ 602. Even otherwise, the Pir Sahib is not a gathering – loving or procession – leading type of politician. When he was supposed to lead a procession at Lahore on 9 April, he avoided it considering the activity to be something below his status. He was, therefore probably reluctant when the responsibility of leading the procession on 30 April was thrust upon him. He has his own peculiar temperament and cannot do anything which does not go with it. Personally, I also have the feeling that he had did not consider Prime Minister Bhutto all that important that he should personally step out on the road and walk on foot in the long march. Such an action would have been totally against his dignified position. I clearly remember that he nursed untold hatred for Mr. Bhutto because of the telephone call he had made to him immediately after assuming power. In fact, Mr. Bhutto was somewhat scared of his influence in Sindh because of his position as a spiritual head. In that province he considered only one person to be his real opponent and rival, and that was Pir Sahib Pagara Sharif. On taking over office Mr. Bhutto had threatened him over the phone in a rude manner saying, " My name is ZulfiKar Ali Bhutto: I'll fix you". However, when

it was decided that Pir Sahib would lead PNA's long march in Rawalpindi on 30 April, Mr. Bhutto suddenly decided to appear on the roads himself. After making a round of the city and cantonment areas, he went straight to Hotel Intercontinental where Pir Sahib was under detention. There he had a talk with him for almost 50 minutes. Talking to newsmen after that, Mr. Bhutto said, "We have old religious affiliation with the Pir Sahib's family, as such even if he has to be put in jail it will in no way be inferior to Intercon."

After the failure of the long march, Pir Sahib was escorted to his hometown with all respect and reverence the very next morning, May the 1st.

It was on Thursday, 28 April that the Foreign Minister of the Arab Emirates, Ahmed Khalifa Alswedi, arrived in Islamabad on a mission to effect reconciliation between the government and the Opposition. He also delivered a special message from Sheikh Zaid bin Sultan Al – Nahiyan to Prime Minister Bhutto in which he had stressed the need for having rapproachment with the Opposition and offered his services for the purpose.

Calling on the Prime Minister soon after arrival, Foreign Minister Ahmed Khalifa went to Sihala where he met the detained PNA leaders. Later, he again made a trip to the place together with the Saudi Arabian Ambassador, Sheikh Riaz Al - Khateeb. The sole purpose to have direct talks with the Government, something which they were avoiding for unknown reasons.

The same day Sardar Sikandar Hayat met Sardar Qayum in the Sihala Rest House. This visit was the result of my suggestion to the Prime Minister that since Sardar Qayum enjoys respect among the ranks of the Opposition he should be approached and asked to find out a way for reconciliation. It was for this reason that Sardar Sikandar Hayat had been sent to contact Sardar Qayum and find out whether he would agree to act as a mediator or not.

On the other side, Mufti Mahmud had summond legal experts from Lahore to prepare an agenda for talks with the Government. Although they could not make it to Sihala on 30 April. Yet it led to the hope that Mufti Mahmud was getting closer to agreeing for negotiations. It was on the same date, 30 April, that the acting Vice – President of PNA, Khan Muhammad Ashraf, and General Secretary, Chaudhry Rehmat Elahi, were placed under arrest. Several incidents of vandalism also took place that day.

Whereas the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates left for home the next morning. Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb remained in touch with the developments. I have never seen the like of him throughout my life. The amount of goodwill he carried in his heart for Pakistan cannot be fathomed. I wish we Pakistani had an iota of it.

On the 2nd of May, he again met the detained leaders in Sihala at 8:30 in the evening. During this meeting Shah Ahmed Noorani acted as the interpreter.

Since Maulana Mufti Mahmud was suffering from an infected big toe, he had been transferred to CMH. As such, Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb went there to call on him, delivering a personal letter from the Prime Minister in which he offered to start negotiations and assured that he would abide by the agreement arrived at between his Government and the PNA. He added that besides Saudi Arabia, all other friendly countries desirious of acting as intermediaries would be witness to the agreement.

At Mufti Sahib's request it was arranged for Pir Pagara, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan and Prof. Ghafoor to meet him in the hospital where the contents of Mr. Bhutto's letter came under consideration.

On 3 May, the Saudi Ambassador again called on Mufti Mahmud in the CMH and sought his reply to Mr. Bhutto's offer. He was told that the PNA would deliver its proposals to Mr. Bhutto the same day. For further detailed discussions with other leaders, Mufti Mahmud was again taken to Sihala.

The same evening, Libya's foreign Minister, Ali Tariqi, arrived in Islamabad and informed Mr. Bhutto of Col. Qaddafi's offer to act as an arbitrator if he so desired. The truth is that the entire Muslim world was perturbed at the internal crisis Pakistan was facing. Such cordial and close relations had been developed with the Muslim countries during the tenure of Mr. Bhutto, that they were fully justified in feeling so concerned, especially when they could see America in a position to take advantage of the internal dissension.

There were many more developments on the same day, 3 May, the first being that the PNA nominated Sardar Sikandar Hayat as its acting Vice – President and Mahmud Ali Kasuri as General Secretary. In Sindh, the Special Tribunal ordered the production in court of Sardar Sher Baz Mazari, Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani, Shah Faridul Haq, Mushir Pesh Imam, Mian Muhammad Shaukat, Zahurul Hassan Bhopati, Nawab Muzaffar Hussain, Dost Muhammad Fiazi and Zareen Khan, all of whom had been arrested under DPR. Hearing of the appeal against the arrest of Chaudhry Zahur Ilahi and J.A. Rahim was put off till 17 May, and the bail application of Mustafa Khar's two brothers, Malik Meeladi Khar and Malik Ghazi Khar was rejected. Incidentally, Mustafa Khar was the senior Vice – President of Muslim League at the time.

On 4 May the Foreign Minister of Libya, Ali Abdussalam Al – Tariqi again met both Prime Minister Bhutto and Mufti Mahmud and apprised them of President Qaddafi's desire of seeing peace and tranquility prevail in Pakistan so that foreign powers might not take advantage of internal turmoil. He then left for his country the same day.

At the same time Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb had a talk with Mufti Mahmud in the CMH following which he was taken to Sihala where besides others, Pir Pagara was also present.

I may mention here that on the night of 3 May a secret meeting took place between Mr. Bhuuto and Mufti Mahmud in the PM House which lasted for several hours. During this the Prime Minister tired his utmost to convince Mufti Mahmud of his sincerity vis a vis negotiations, and also assure him that it was not at this instigation that friends were coming from foreign countries to pressurise the PNA but that they only wished to achieve a patch – up of their own accord. Mr. Bhutto also made it clear to Mufti Mahmud that in case he antagonised friendly countries today it would cause him problems in the future if he ever came to power.

The day after the meeting, the PNA presented a 15 – page charter of demands to the Prime Minister which had been drafted by an 11 – members panel of PNA's legal experts. These included Mahmud Ali Kasuri, S.M. Zafar, Barrister Zahur – ul – Haq, Khalid Ishaq, Aamir Raza Khan, M. Anwar Bar – at-Law, Mirza Abdul Ghafoor Baig, Nasim Farooqi, Syed Ahad Yusuf, Rana Abdur Rahim amd Ismail Chaudhry. These were the same demands which the PNA had presented in its first document presented during the negotiations. The complete text of this document is reproduced by me so that readers may have a clear view of the mental state in which the PNA circles happened to be during those days.

ACCORD

Whereas the Pakistan National Alliance claimed that the elections held in March, 1977, had been rigged on a very large scale to render them unrepresentative of the public opinion;

And whereas the Pakistan People's Party claimed that rigging had not taken place on the scale alliance by the Pakistan National Alliance and asserted that it had won the majority votes;

And whereas as a result of this dispute, political unrest on a very large and unprecedented scale took place in the country, which ultimately led to the imposition of Martial Law, which step also failed to contain or resolve the political problems created in the country;

And whereas brother Muslim countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya and UAE offered their good offices for resolving the conflicts and ensuring implementation of the agreement and following their sincere efforts, talks were held between the representatives of the Pakistan People's Party – which formed the Government after the elections of March 77 – on the one hand, and the Pakistan National Alliance, on the other, to ensure the holding of honest, just and fair elections and avoidance of corrupt practices and restoration of congenial

atmosphere, mutual confidence and tranquility necessary for such elections; and to prevent the abuse of power,

Now, the parties here to have agreed upon THIS ACCORD as here under:-

(1) Dissolution of Assemblies: That the National Assembly and all the four Provincial Assemblies shall stand dissolved on ___________ and the Provincial Chief Ministers and Provincial Ministers shall cease to hold office from the same date.

(2) New Elections: Election to the National Assembly shall be held on 7.10.77 for female voters and to the four Provincial Assemblies on 10.10.77 for male voters and 11.10.77 for female voters.

(3) Senate: That all the persons elected as member of the Senate by the National Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies constituted after the elections held in March, 1977, shall cease to be members of the Senate forth with at these vacancies shall be filled by elections by the new National Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies, to be constituted pursuant to the elections to be held in October, 1977, provided that the member of the Senate who are due to retire in August, 1977, shall continue as members till the National Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies elected in October, 1977, elect new Senators in their place, as also additional Senators.

(4) Supreme Implementation Council: That for the purpose of ensuring full and faithful compliance with and implementation of the Accord there shall be constituted a Supreme Implementation Council (hereinafter called the Council) which shall perform such functions and have such authority as are specified in Schedule A to this Accord and in addition shall until the new Provincial Government are constituted after the elections to be held in October, 1977, exercise the power of the President and the Federal Government and the Provincial Governments.

(5) Provincial Government: That consequent to the dissolution of the four Provincial Assemblies, the executive authority of the Provincial shall, subject to the control and direction of the council, vest in the Governors of the Provinces appointed by mutual consent of the parties to this Accord, who shall have all the powers and exercise all the functions vesting in a Provincial Governor and the Provincial Government under the Constitution of Pakistan.

(6) Ordinances: That no ordinance shall be promulgated by the President of Pakistan or by any Governor of any Province unless it has received the prior approval of the Council.

(7) Review of Key appointment: That the Council shall makes fresh appointments and / or review postings to all key posts including Secretaries to the Federal Ministers and Divisions, Heads of all Law – enforcing and investigating agencies including the Director General, Federal Security Forces, and the Chief Secretaries and Secretaries to the Provincial Governments, Provincial Inspectors – General of Police, Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Inspectors – General of Police and the Deputy Commissioners and the Superintendents of Police. All changes and transfer of officials holding the aforesaid appointments shall be subject to the control of the Council.

(8) BALUCHISTAN: That the Army shall be recalled to the barracks in the Province of Baluchistan and immediately measure shall be initiated and implemented for the restoration of confidence in the public and the creation of circumstance necessary to enable the citizens to come back to their normal abodes for the purposes of the election. Adequate arrangements, Financial and administrative, shall be made for the rehabilitation of all such persons and their families who had to abandon their home in Baluchistan or who were injured or who lost their lives since February, 1973.

(9) Azad Kashmir : That the Azad Kashmir Assembly shall be dissolved on _________ and the present President and the Prime Minister and the Ministers shall cause to hold office and a new care – taker President shall be appointed in consultation with the All Jamu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and shall be vested with all the powers and functions of the Government of Azad Kashmir. Unilateral amendments made in the Azad Kashmir Constitution shall be replaced and fresh elections to the Azad Kashmir Assembly and the office of the President of Azad Kashmir shall be held on _________, 1977. Appointment on Election Commissioner and other arrangements shall be made with the agreement of the All Jamu and Kashmir Muslim Conference.

(10) Constitutional Amendments: That all amendments made in the Constitution of Pakistan including those effecting fundamental rights of the citizens of Pakistan, and restricting the jurisdiction and impairing judicial power of superior courts as shown in Schedule B to this Accord shall be replaced forthwith by the National Assembly.

(11) Withdrawal of Emergency: That the declaration of Emergency is withdrawn with effect from _________ and all fundamental rights shall stand restored, and shall not be abridged, suspended or abrogated, nor shall a new emergency be imposed for the duration of the Accord.

(12) Withdrawal of DPO: The Defence of Pakistan Ordinance is withdrawal forthwith and Tribunals constituted there under abolished and all persons convicted or facing trial there under shall be released and cases under the DPO withdrawn.

(13) Special Courts, etc: Special courts and Special Tribunals under the Anti Terrorists Act and Anti National Activities Act shall be abolished forthwith and all persons convicted or facing trial thereunder shall be released and the cases withdrawn.

(14) Army Act, 1952: That amendments to the Army Act by Act X of 1977 shall be withdrawn with immediate effect and persons convicted thereunder shall be released forthwith.

(15) Release of persons: That all persons detained under preventive detention Laws, held in custody for interrogation or otherwise by police or other Law – enforcing agencies or by the armed forces or undergoing trials, or the demand for elections or for participating in political activities commencing from 1st January, 1972 shall be released forthwith and cases against them in this behalf shall be withdrawn. Where necessary, Law officers shall enter a statement of holle prosequi even at the appellate stage. No fresh cases against political workers will be initiated nor will such persons be arrested. A committee consisting of equal number of members of both parties shall review all cases which the Government feels as not covered by this paragraph. A list of such persons shall be provided within two weeks.

(16) Convicted workers: That political leaders or workers tried for offences under section 124 A of the PPC since 1.1.1972 and convicted by tribunals under the Anti – National Activities Act shall stand acquitted forthwith and pending cases of the aforesaid nature shall also stand withdrawn.

(17) Compensation: That the families of all such persons who lost their lives during and after the elections held in March, 1977, in consequence of elections or in its aftermath shall be given adequate compensation and relief and adequate financial assistance shall be given to all such persons who have suffered injuries in the aforesaid circumstances.

(18) Externees: That all such persons who have been externed from Pakistan (other than those seeking destruction of the integrity or sovereignty of Pakistan) or who are not allowed to return to Pakistan on account of political considerations shall be allowed to come back immediately.

(19) No arrests: That no one shall be arrested, detained, held or prosecuted for taking part in any political activity relating to the elections.

(20) Section 144: That no restriction under section 144 Cr. P.c. shall be imposed in restraint of political activities.

(21) Press: That all restriction on the freedom of press shall stand withdrawn forthwith and Declaration of newspapers and periodicals cancelled or withdrawn since 1.1.1972 for expression of political opinion shall also stand restored forthwith.

(22) Official Media: That the officially – controlled or owned media shall project news and views with balance and impartially. Equal time, opportunity and fair projection shall be allowed by the Pakistan. Television Corporation, the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation and the National Press Trust prepare and magazines to the news and views of the Pakistan People's Party and the Pakistan National Alliances. Two above – mentioned media shall restrain from character assessination of political parties and workers.

(23) Trade Unions: That all lawful trade union activities shall be encourage and curbs and restrictions on the same shall be immediately removed.

(24) That the Federal and Provincial Government shall do every thing necessary to give full effect to the Accord and shall not do any thing or permit any thing to be done or allow anything to remain undone which will in manner defeat the implementation of the Accord.

(25) Election Commission : That the Election Commission shall consist of the Chairman of the Commission and four members to be appointed with the concurrence of the Pakistan National Alliance. The Election Commission shall have the power to appoint such officers and servants including judicial officers as are considered necessary for the discharge of its functions and also shall have power to impose penalties on such persons for any breach of discipline or commission of any malpractice or illegality.

(26) Authority of Election Commission: That the Election Commission shall be given adequate legal authority, finances and administrative powers and the power to issue prohibitory and mandatory orders and attachment orders, and the power of the High Court to release persons on bail or to suspend operation of orders of arrest as may be necessary to enable it to conduct the election honestly, justly and fairly and in accordance with law and to effectively prevent corrupt practices. Amendments shall immediately be made in the Election Laws in accordance with Schedule C.

(27) Armed Forces to aid Election Commission: The appropriate amendments shall be made in the Representation of People's Act, 1976 in terms of Articles 245 of the Constitution to enable the Commission to call upon the Armed Forces of Pakistan to reader aid and assitance and to provide personal for the purpose of holding.

(28) Election Results: That the results of the elections shall be only be announced by the Election Commission itself and public media including the radio, the T.V. and papers controlled by the National Press Trust shall not dissominate information about the results of the election except under the authority of the Election Commission to be issued in writing.

(29) Implementation: That implementation of clauses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 25, 26 & 27 of the Accord will require the enactment of temporary constitutional amendment the enactment of which shall be the responsibility of the Pakistan People's Party. For the purpose of immediate implementation of the Accord enactment and amendment of various laws, issuance of directions and notification, removal and appointments of functionaries, release of persons shall be accomplished before ______________________ Schedule A

SUPREME IMPLEMENTATION COUNCIL.

(1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the constitution, for the purpose of ensuring full and faithful compliance with and the implementation of the Accord arrived at between the Pakistan People's Party and the Pakistan National Alliance on ___________ (hereinafter called the Council).

(2) The members of the Council shall be:
(a) Five members to be nominated by the Pakistan People's Party from time to time.
(b) Five members to be nominated by the Pakistan National Alliance form time to time.

(3) The Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party and the President of the Pakistan National Alliance shall be the Co – Chairmen of the Council.

(4) The Council shall have full authority to consider, on reference being made to it by any of its members or of its own motion or on a complaint received, any matter or issue concerning non – compliance with or implementation of the Accord and shall, after consideration, give its decision.

(5) Decision of the Council shall unanimous, failing which the matter or issue shall stand automatically referred for decision to the Supreme Court.

(6) That the Reference shall be placed before the three senior – most judges of the Supreme Court who shall after issuance of notice to all the members of the Implementation Council and discussing the matter or

issue 'in camera' with the Council or such of its members as attend give its decision by a majority within? Hours of the receipt of the Reference and such decision of the Supreme Court shall be deemed to be a decision of the Council.

(7) That the Council shall on the first working day of every week and shall continue its deliberation till such time as the business at hand has been fully disposed of.

(8) That the quorum for the meeting of the Council shall be seven members and in the event of a meeting not being held on account of failure of quorum the matter or issue shall be deemed to have been automatically referred to the Supreme Court for decision as aforesaid and the Supreme Court shall take action.

(9) That the decisions of the Council shall be forthwith implemented by the Federal and the Provincial Government, as the case may be, and shall be binding on all constitutional and executive authorities and functionaries performing any duties or functions in connection with the affairs of the Federal or the Provinces, including the Armed Forces, Government Corporations, Government – controlled media and it shall be the duty of the aforesaid persons, authorities and functionaries to act in aid of and carry out decisions and directions of the Council.

(10) That the Council shall have the power to make its own Rules of Procedure and regulate its own procedure.

(11) That the Federal Government shall provide all such facilities as are requisite for the functioning of the Council and the expenditure shall be a charge upon the Federal Consolidated Fund.

NOTE: It is suggested that the above be incorporated in to the Constitution in the shape of a temporary amendment as Article 154 – A of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and should cease to be in force immediately after the election of the Prime Minister.

SCHEDULE B

AMENIMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION TO BE REPEALED.

Amendment No.	Section	Article Amended
1	3	8
1	5	61
1	7	127
1	8	193
1	9	199

1	10	200
1	12	212
3	2	10
3	3	232
4	6	54
4	8	199
5	2	101
5	5	179
5	6	180
5	7	187
5	9	195
5	10	196
5	11	199
5	12	200
5	14	206
5	17	280
6	2	179
6	3	195
7	2	96 A
7	3	101
7	4	245

Schedule C

AMENDMENTS REQUIRED IN LAWS RELATING TO ELECTION.

1. In Article 218, clause (2), sub – clause (b) should be amended so as to substitute the word "two" by the word "four".

2. In Article 221, it shall be provided that the Commission will have the authority to requisition the services of all persons in the service of Pakistan, and by an appropriate amendment in section 2 of the Representation of People's Act, 1976, it shall be provided that:

   "Service of Pakistan includes employees of Universities, local bodies, government – corporations, autonomous corporations, government – controlled institutions and industries and members of the Armed Forces of Pakistan".

3. Amendment should be made to section 5 of the Representation of People's Act so as to add a new sub – section (3) to the effect that where any person is required by the Commission to perform functions under sub – section (2) such person shall be bound forthwith by the directions of the Commission which shall have full authority to exercise all discipline, reducing in rank or dismissal from service or otherwise punish them if in the opinion of the Commission they have failed to carry out the orders and directions of the Commission or have been fully of misconduct or disobedience in the performance of duties in connection with the election

terms and conditions of service of such servants in the parent department notwithstanding and such orders shall be made appealable to the full Commission only.

4. An amendment should be made by addition of Section 64 – A to the Representation of place not empowering the Election Commission to his appeal against the counting of votes by the Presiding or the Returning Officer, as the case may be, and Article 225 of the Constitution should be suitably amended to permit this.

5. A new section 103 should be added to the Representation of People's Act empowering the Election Commission to issue mandatory and prohibitory orders to all executive authorities in the service of Pakistan and to all Government institutions and corporations in all matters connected with or pertaining to the elections in order to ensure honest, just and fair elections.

6. It is further suggested that another sub – section be added to section 103 to the effect to enable the Election Commission or its delegates to exercise the powers of a High Court in the matter of granting bails and in making other mandatory and prohibitory orders to protect bona fide candidates and their workers and that these powers should be exercisable from the date of the notification of the election and these powers should be in addition to those exercised by ordinary courts.

7. It is suggested that a further sub – section be added to section 103 to give powers to the Election Commission to issue prohibitory order, amendatory orders and the orders of attachment and all other such orders against any person as are necessary to enable the holding of a just, fair and honest election and to prevent the commission of corrupt practices, briery or undue influence or violation of the provisions of the Act or the rules made thereunder.

8. Section 42 of the Act should be amended so as to provide that election results should only be declared by the Election Commission and not by the Returning officers and further providing that no public announcement of the results can be made by any person or authority by concept under the direction of the Commission.

9. Section 85 of the Act should be amended so as to prohibit the issuance to a voter of any paper bearing the symbol or the name of the candidate or the name, parentage or the place of residence of the voter.

10. It should be made a penal offence for any person to use wire – tapping or to use electronic instruments to intercept any conversation, telephone or

otherwise, and the Commission should be given the power of ordering the restoration of disconnected telephones.

11. The Pakistan National Alliance had constituted a committee to examine the various malpractice which came to light during the recent elections to suggest measure for ensuring honest, just and fair elections. Its report is appended and its recommendations should be enacted in to law and rules.

12. It is understood that the present Chief Election Commissioner had recently made a report to the Government in reaction to the recent election in which he had recommended various amendments necessary for ensuring fair elections. A copy of the same should be made available to the Pakistan National Alliance which shall make its comments thereon.

13. It is further necessary that the new Chief Election Commissioner be asked to review the present electoral laws and his recommendations be obtained for the purpose of ensuring honest, just and fair elections and the eradication of corrupt practices and all the recommendation of the new Chief Election Commissioner should immediately be enacted in to Laws and rules for this purposes.

Seeing such a long list of demands the Prime Minister was completely upset. Expressing hi opinion on Thursday, 5 May, he said that the lengthy list had made things all the more complicated and that the PNA should have put forward only basic demands. In answer to this Pir Pagara came up with a reply the same day. He said, “if the present draft is acceptable, then an agreement is possible, following which the assemblies should be dissolved within seven days, and elections held 30 days later.”

It was an extremely disturbing situation. PNA’s draft was not such that a decision could be taken on it in a hurry - - it needed detailed study and enough time. The Prime Minister, therefore, decided to call a meeting of the PPP’s Parliamentary Party on 10 May to deliberate on the draft. Simultaneously, cases under DPR were registered against Pir Sahib Pagara, Sardar Sikander Hayat and Abu Saeed Anwer and the police started conducting raids for their arrest. At the same time, curfew was again imposed in Lahore.

The same evening there was another important incident. Malik Ghulam Mustafa Khar suddenly arrived in Islamabad and finding his erstwhile friend and leader, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in a tight corner, again offered him his services. Undertaking to do that on his own, he had driven over in his white Mercedes all the way from Lahore, with himself all the wheel. He was highly emotional at the time; he had just not been able to digest the conspiracies hatched by foreign powers against the Prime Minister.

It was a strange scene, this reunion! The eyes of most of the friends around were moist.

CHAPTER 12

MR. BHUTTO IN SIHALA REST HOUSE

Some days after the PNA launched its agitation, I told the Prime Minister that what had started as a protest against rigging in the elections, was now turning into a religious movement. As such, when a movement acquires a religious colours, people are prone to lay down their lives without any hesitation. The PNA's political uproar against the PPP regime was now openly taking the shape of a movement for the enforcement of 'Nizam – e – Mustafa'.

Reading the message of the gathering clouds, the Prime Minister sent me a letter on 5 April 1977. (By then the barriers of bureaucracy had been shed between the two of us and way of address was once again his own.

Unfortunately, the Prime Minister just took the whole problem to be nothing but 'maulviology' i.e. the idiosyncracies of some fundamentalists, and wanted to put up a force of a similar nature to toe his line of thought and confront them. Earlier, he had himself constantly been opposing the handing over control of Auqaf (religious endowment) to the Federal Government, but with the agitation brewing up against him, he now wanted me to set up a committee comprising provincial ministers of Auqaf and religious leaders to support the Centre. It took a long time for the Prime Minister to realise the importance of what I had been hinting at from the very early days. It was on 17 April, when both of us were at Lahore, that I had suggested that he should forthwith hold a Press conference and announce some concrete steps he would be taking for the enforcement of Nizam – e - Mustafa.

Under his instructions. I drafted the points to be covered in that Press conference and handed these over to him the same day. The full text of my letter and the Prime Minister's note it is reproduced here.

Prime Minister's House,
Rawalpindi.

5 April 1977,

My dear Minister,

The pulpit is playing an important role in the PNA agitation and the maulvis including those employed by Auqaf, by and large, are its main –0 stay. It is time that a counter – force of the Government starting with weaning away from the PNA of the maulvis employed by the Auqaf Department. Some of the important maulvis and religious leaders who supported us during the elections. In this, you would need full cooperation and support of the Provincial Departments. You should, therefore, form a committee under your chairmanship at which all the Provincial Auqaf Ministers should also sit. You should meet periodically, evolve a line of action and put it into practice without any delay. I hope you will keep me informed of the steps you take in this direction and progress you achieve, from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

Mualana Kausar Niazi,
Minister for Religious Affairs,
Islamabad.

MINISTER FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

CAMP AT LAHORE
the 17th April, 1977

As per desire of the Prime Minister I am submitting below points for his Press Conference regarding the introduction of “Nizam – e – Mustafa”.

I would beg to emphasize that while declaring his determination to establish the Islamic Order in Pakistan, the Prime Minister should make sure that it does not appear to be a time impression, unfortunately, is formed by the Public, I am afraid the whole exercise might boomerang.

PNA will anyhow, try to create doubts about the sincerety of the P.P.P. and the Prime Minister in actual implementation of the Islamic Orders.

I would, therefore, with the permission of the Prime Minister and after his announcement, follow up by a series of district – wise public meetings and discussions with leading Ulemas and Mashaikh of all sects and schools of thoughts, including those who are in the Opposition.

Finally I would submit with all the emphasis at my command that by itself, this announcement will not have the desired impact, unless it is preceded by whatever political move or announcement what the Prime Minister may be contemplating to offer to the public at large and the Opposition in particular.

Submitted.

(KAUSAR NIAZI)

THE PRIME MINISTER

I had submitted to the Prime Minister that he should declare the enforcement of Islamic Laws in the country, assuring people that it was neither a political gimmick nor was he thereby trying to buy time. I warned him that if. God forbid, people get the wrong impression from his announcement, the result would be disastrous. I also added that since the PNA would try its level best to give a different colour to his declarations and create suspicion in the minds of the people, I would personally establish contact and hold consultations for the

enforcement of Islamic laws with all the religious leaders of the country, without discrimination, once he had made the announcement.

Prior to that, on 8 April, I had also tried through a letter to arrange his meeting with the religious leaders. It is reproduced here.

SECRET

Government of Pakistan
Ministry of Religious Affairs
Minority Affairs & Overseas Pakistanis

NOTE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

Subject: - PROPOSAL FOR PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH A CROSS – SECTION OF
ULEMA AND MASHAIKH.

Prime Minister will kindly recall conversation with him in Peshawar on the subject of Ulema who are participating in the Opposition's agitation.

2. I had submitted to the Prime Minister that unfortunately the agitation has acquired the colour of a religious crusade because of the mischievous but successful efforts of some elements in the Opposition, with the result that even those simple – minded Ulema who have no political motives have found themselves compelled to join in.

3. In order to wean away these Ulema, and those who are politically conscious but otherwise non – aligned, I would propose that Prime Minister may kindly agree to meet about 100 selected Ulema and Mashaikh from all over the country who are amenable to reason and on whose religious emotions Prime Minister may create a favourable impact by offering certain suggestions and even announcing certain decisions.

4. To achieve the above objectives, I would suggest for the consideration of the Prime Minister that in his meeting with the Ulema and Mashaikh, he might like to include the following important points: -

(I) In conformity with and in continuation of, his Government's Islamic policies and actions, the Prime Minister may offer an immediate ban on such practices as are unanimously condemned by the Ulema and by a great majority of the citizens of Pakistan and which are constantly used to criticise the Islamic Republic of Pakistan practices like consumption of alcohol and gambling (horse – racing and other forms). I feel that, if this could be done, this one single act would be

sufficient to dissociate the above mentioned class of Ulema and Mashaikh from the Opposition's agitation, and they might even be persuaded to give public statements aimed at weakening the force of the agitation. Of course, the impact on the people themselves would be tremendous.

(II) With regard to the Opposition's main demand for enforcement of Sharist, the Prime Minister may like to announce his decision to nominate new members in the Council of Islamic ideology; and if the Ulema so feel, the inclusion of Maulana Maudoodi and Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani in the Council; or alternatively he may announce the setting up of a Commission to recommend within a period of 6 months ways and means for enforcement of Shariat Laws. This would take away the wind out of Opposition's main propaganda stunt which has lured many Ulema who are peace – loving otherwise.

5. The Ministry already has a list of Ulema and Mashaikh ready with it which has been prepared on the basis of the recommendations of the Provincial Auqaf Departments and invitations will be issued to them after the Prime Minister will be kind enough to indicate a day and time convenient to him for such a meeting.

(KAUSAR NIAZI)
8 – 4 – 1977

<u>The Prime Minister.</u>

However, interior Minister Khan Abdul Qayum Khan had given him the impression that the religious leaders of the frontier province had turned vehemently against th4e Government and hence some remedial action was essential. As such, as per orders of the Prime Minister, I undertook with religious scholars of different schools of thought, I also addressed several public meetings. Submitting my report on return I tired my best to make it very clear to the Prime Minister that the agitation had assumed a religious colour and even those religious scholars were now involved in it who never had anything to do with politics. I, therefore, suggested that he should consult about a hundred selected ulema drawn from all over the country, and in the light of their suggestions announce his decision of enforcing Islamic laws. As an immediate step, I further suggested, he should straightaway announce a ban on gambling and liquor which would wean not interested in politics. In addition, I stressed the need for reconstituting the Council of Islamic Ideology with the inclusion of Mualana Maudoodi and Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani, and the complete enforcement of Shariat Laws in the country within six months. I told him such a step would take the wind out of the opposition's sails. Submitting the names of the religious scholars and elucidating other steps to be taken in this connection by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, I sought his permission to arrange a meeting with them. However, on the letter I had written to the Prime Minister on 8 April he gave the following remarks: "I can meet them all right, but these important proposals must be brought to the Cabinet in its next meetings." As such, under

my instruction, the Secretary Ministry of Religious Affairs prepared a detailed note for consideration by the Cabinet. It is reproduced here:

I honestly believe that it was the most opportune moment for enforcement of Nizam – e – Islam in the country which was allowed to slip and the dream of the Muslims of the sub – continent may hardly ever come true in the future. Had Prime Minister Bhutto desired, Islamic Laws could have been enforced in the country at the time after which neither would anyone feel the need of launching a movement in the name of Islam nor would any opportunist be able to exploit the religious sentiments of the masse. The issue could have been settled there and then. Yet it is sad to recall, this was not destined to happen. The Prime Minister took so long to give serious thought to my suggestion that in the meantime power slipped out of his hands. Decision on the suggestion put before him in the beginning of April was taken in May. In a Press Conference held in the Governor's House, Lahore, when he announcing a ban on liquor and gambling, the BBC reported it briefly adding cynically that "when Mr. Bhutto was announcing a ban on liquor, he was smoking a cigar." (In Urdu the word used for smoking is 'drinking') With the single short sentence BBC caused all kinds of doubts in the minds of the people regarding the step he had taken. The common man thought that a cigar is also some kind of liquor which he was 'drinking' even while announcing a ban on it. Some maulvis even put a straight question to me. "We could not hear properly," Such was the mental caliber of those associated with the movement for enforcement of Nizam – e – Mustafa which was being fully exploited by foreign powers.

On 7 May, a meeting was held of the Select Committee formed in the National Assembly under my chairmanship. It had been given the task of drafting the ban on liquor and gambling in the form of a Bill for presentation in the Assembly. Those in the Committee were Finance Minister Abdul Hafeez Pirzada, Law Minister S.M. Masud, Agriculture Minister Sheikh Muhammad Rashid, Industries Minister Hamid Raza Gilani, Mir Afzal Khan, Sahibzada Nazir Sultan, Ali Asghar Shah and Malik Siokandar Khan. It was decided to move the Bill in the National Assembly on Tuesday, 10 May. It was duly presented on that date it; was also passed and became an Act. In addition, a Bill declaring Friday as the weekly holiday was also passed. The Senate also gave its assent to both these Bills on Thursday, 12 May. As such it was through us "Kafirs" that such steps were taken towards the enforcement of an Islamic system in the country which no one could dare taken in the past, nor would any man of God have the good fortune to take it later.

It is only incidentally that all this is being mentioned. Yet it proves that the parties forming the National Alliance were in no way sincere about the enforcement of Shariat laws. Had they been sincere, they could easily have had these enforced by Mr. Bhutto himself at the time and not devoted their entire energies towards his ouster from power. Indeed, their objective was totally

different; Nizam – e – Mustafa was only a slogan the connotation of which was probably not known even to most of the leaders of the Alliance.

Through Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb, the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia, Mr. Bhutto sent a message to the leaders detained at Sihala suggesting that they first discuss their lengthy charter of demands at the ministerial level and arrive at an agreed formula. For this purpose Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb contacted the PNA leaders on 6 May and also informed them about the late King Khalid and Crown – Prince Fahd's desire of a rapproachement. However pir Sahib Pagara Sharif came up with an eight – page document on behalf of the Alliance declaring that they were not prepared to hold any talks at the ministerial level.

The next day, besides the Saudi Ambassador, the Libyan Ambassador also met Mufti Mahmud in the CMH and tried to convince him of the need to effect a rapproachement. On his side Mr. Bhutto was insistent that the opposition pouts up only its basic demands, since talks on the lengthy document presented by it were not possible. To make the PNA leaders agree to this, Riaz Al – Khateeb made yet another trip to Sihala on 8 May. During this meeting, Pir Sahib Pagara came up with the plea that their basic demands were only five and all else in the document was merely by way of elucidation.

On 9 May Mr. Bhutto went to Karachi leaving instruction that if the PNA was agreeable we may start the talks. However, the PNA leaders were not prepared to talk to anyone below the level of the Prime Minister. This final decision of theirs was conveyed to Mr. Bhutto by Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb.

Returning of Islamabad on 11 May, Mr. Bhutto declared that he was prepared for direct negotiations with the PNA adding that he did not know what the result would be if the negotiations broke down. The same day a meeting was held of the People's Party's Parliamentary Group, in which Prime Minister Bhutto was given the authority to negotiate with the PNA. The same afternoon the Cabinet had an important meeting in the PM House under the chairmanship of Mr. Bhutto. Besides myself, those present included Hafeez Pirzada, Hamid Raza Gilani, Aziz Ahmed, Mir Afzal, Tikka Khan and some other ministers. Till eight in the night we kept pondering over different aspects of the strategy to be adopted in our formal negotiations with the PNA. After the meeting we all dispersed and left for our respective homes.

It was around nine – thirty that night that the Prime Minister's ADC rang up and asked me to reach the PM House immediately. Getting there, I saw Hafeez Pirzada and Mir Afzal Khan already sitting on chairs laid out in the lawn. Hardly had I taken my seat when Mr. Bhutto turned up and said, "Lets go." All of us stood up not knowing where we were supposed to go as nothing of the sort had been mentioned during the Cabinet meeting.

When we were all seated in the car, the Prime Minister's Military Secretary, Maj. Gen. Imtiaz, suddenly made his appearance. Opening the front door he took his seat beside the chauffeur. I noticed a frown on the brow of Mr. Bhutto as if he did not approve of what Imtiaz had done. Although the glass partition between the front and rear seats prevented any sound getting to the other side, yet Mr. Bhutto did not deem it proper to tell us as to where we were going and on what mission. In fact, he considered Gen. Imtiaz to be a confidant of the army and hence did not have much trust in him.

Leaving the city behind, the car spend along the airport road moving towards Sihala. Throughout the way, none of us uttered a word, of course knowing by now where we were heading for.

Mualana Mufti Mahmud, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan and Sardar Qayum had been detained in the Sihala Rest House and we had gone there to meet him. As we got there all three of them received us most cordially and without any trace of unpleasantness in their attitude. Prime Minister Bhutto sat down on a sofa with Mufti Mahmud and Nawabzada Sahib, while I sat on another and started talking to Sardar Qayum. The whole atmosphere was pleasant and the conversation proceeded very smoothly. Forgetting the bitterness of the past, views were exchanged about forging a fresh path for the future. "If you wish to be helpful, you can play a positive role in this connection," I said to Sardar Qayum," the country will not be able to bear the weight of the present stress for too long."

Sardar Qayum is saturated with love for Pakistan; he accepted my suggestion right away. "If I can do anything worthwhile, "he said, "My services are there." However, Mufti Mahmud and Nawabzada Nasrullah contended that they could not agree to starting negotiations without consulting their other colleagues. As such they desired that arrangement be made for all of them to be one place.

"But why shouldn't Sardar Qayum start off with personally contacting all detained leaders at different stations," said Prime Minister Bhutto," and strive to make them agree to negotiations by pointing out the gravity of the situation? After that we'll provide the opportunity for all of you to be at one location."

Mufti Mahmud and Nawabzada Nasrullah agreed to this suggestion and it was decided that Sardar Qayum would be set a liberty so that he can go round meeting the other PNA leaders to prepare a stage for negotiations.

Sardar Qayum agreed to perform the duty of visiting the detained leaders in various jails fully confident that he would be able to accomplish his mission. As for us, we prayed for his success and came away.

On the way back, Mr. Bhutto appeared very happy and satisfied. However, because of the presence of Gen. Imtiaz in the car, he did not say anything on the issue.

On arrival at PM House, the Prime Minister conducted us all to his personal apartment. As we took our seats in the verandah, he addressed me first. “Now say what you have to,” he said, “I signaled to you on the way that ‘their’ agent is around.” Evidently he was referring to the Generals.

We kept talking for some about various things in the light of what had transpired at Sihala. Mr. Bhutto was highly pleased with the success of his trip. Suddenly he picked up the phone and ordered that Maj.. Gen. Abdullah Malik (CGS to the chief of Army Staff) be summoned. On his arrival, Mr. Bhutto gave him the same happy news, almost verbatim. He told him that a beginning had been made for the opposition to sit across the negotiating table and that it would lead to positive results. Gen. Malik also expressed his happiness at hearing that. Even otherwise, he was a great admirer of Mr. Bhutto’s and his true well – wisher. During the conversation, Mr. Bhutto suddenly posed question to him. “What’s the news on your side?” he asked. “Well,” replied Abdullah Malik, “ some people appear to have certain reservations.” No problem,” said Mr. Bhutto, “everything will be all right.

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CHAPTER 13

WAY PAVED FOR NEGOTIATIONS

Soon after the announcement of the election results, Prime Minister Bhutto started having frequent meetings with the Crops Commanders. Sitting at the dining table after one such meeting. Abdullah Malik expressed his views about the responsibilities of the army for restoration of law and order in the country. Soon as he finished, the Crops Commander of Rawalpindi Division. General Faiz Ali Chishti, looked at him sternly and said in a rather loud tone, “You are not a Crops Commander, what do you know of our difficulties! Why should we fire? Political problems should have political solutions.”

This remark caused a hush. Abdullah Malik was junior to Faiz Ali Chishti as also to some other generals around. Hearing these words, the Prime Minister also got into a pensive mood. Soon Lt – Gen. Sawar Khan and Arbab Jehanzeb also started denouncing Abdullah Malik and the atmosphere heated up causing quite some unpleasantness.

After this meeting and the dinner, the Prime Minister appeared fairly upset; anxiety was writ large on his face. That was the first occasion that the generals had spoken in this strain in his presence. Actually, it was only after this episode that Mr. Bhutto started thinking seriously about having negotiations with the PNA; the importance of such an exercise had now dawned upon him.

The Prime Minister had commenced this round of meetings and dinners with the Generals because he did not wish to let his relationship remain confined only to the Chief of Army Staff. He wished to develop a personal equation with all the Crops Commanders. He, therefore, took active interest in these meetings and tried to charm everyone with his conversation.

During one such meeting I noticed something unusual. Taking to the Generals, Mr. Bhutto was in the middle of a sentence when I saw two of them, sitting side by side, nudging each other. That made it obvious that Mr. Bhutto had lost grip over the Generals and that his meetings and dinner parties with them were not to prove fruitful.

In another such meeting with the Crop Commanders, when they were giving a resume of the situation in their respective areas, a heated argument ensured between Agriculture Minister Sheikh Muhammad Rashid and Lt. Gen Muhammad Iqbal. As it is, the General was already averse to him for his communistic leanings.

This verbal battle rendered the atmosphere extremely tense. Gen Arbaz Jehanzeb went to the extent of saying openly. “We now fear the soldiers my even start firing at us!” Addressing me. Gen. Iqbal said, “You come over to Lahore: I can arrange your meeting with the religious leaders.” I made no response to this.

To break the tension, the Chief of Army Staff. Gen. Zia – ul – Haq, advised Gen. Iqbal and Sheikh Rashid not to argue with each other. In the meantime, Hafeez Pirzada came up with the suggestion about a referendum. (I have earlier mentioned that Mr. Bhutto had discussed this aspect with Gen. Malik) The suggestion was that a referendum be held only on the issue whether Mr. Bhutto should continue or not, and if the people were in his favour he should also be empowered to amend the Constitution.

As soon as the Prime Minister expressed his approval of Hafeez Pirzada’s suggestion. Gen. Zia – ul – Haq also agreed to it. After that all the other Generals added that they had no objection to it.

When Mr. Bhutto once more looked towards Gen. Zia – ul – Haq with questioning eyes, he spoke up again. “Sir,” he said, ”we should have something at least to sell to the jawans and keep the army pacified” Well,” said Mr. Bhutto. I’ll hold the referendum to find out whether the people have trust in me or not. That would give me a mandate to armed the Constitution whereby I’ll determine the role of the army in the affairs of the government. As it is, the present government (system) cannot work without the army’s participation.”

Gen. Zia – ul – Haq expressed his pleasure at this statement as well “Right, sir,” he said, I’ll be able to sell this to my jawans.

So far as I was concerned, I only kept jotting down a few notes of this meeting and mostly remained silent. Personally I was averse to the idea of a referendum as there were several flaws in it, the first being that it was a hasty and one – side decision without preparing the ground for it. What if the Opposition rejects the idea? Would it help to stop the agitation? These were the questions hovering in my mind at that time.

Speaking in the National Assembly on 1 May, Prime Minister Bhutto floated the idea of holding a referendum contending that he was prepared to get a verdict from the masses whether they want him or not “I am prepared to put my own self on trial,” he asserted, “but cannot sacrifice the National Assembly. The losing party has no right to demand my resignation. This arrangement would be temporary for which an amendment will be made in the Constitution.”

The very next day, Pir Pagara announced rejection of the suggestion on behalf of the PNA. One of the reasons why PNA was allergic to Mr. Bhutto was that he was liable to suddenly play a new card at any time. On one side he was paving the way for negotiations with the PNA and on the other he was busy

pacifying the Generals But now he had suddenly produced a third dimension - - a referendum!

The day after announcement (15 May), Pir Pagara was placed under detention in his house on Hill Road. Almost simultaneously, Hafeez Pirzada got an amendment in the Constitution approved by Parliament on 16 May, to clear the way for the referendum with the proviso that its results would not be challengeable in court. It was also enunciate that the Constitutional amendment would be valid only up to 30 September and that the referendum would be held after the Budget Session. for this purpose a Referendum Commission would be formed under the Chairmanship of the Chief of the Supreme Court.

Mufti Mahmud was a chronic diabetic and his big toe was infected. Although not feeling too well that day, he still met the Foreign Minister of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al – Ahmed Jabar Al – Sabah and talked to him for about one and a half hour. Besides the Kuwait Ambassador, the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates, Rashid Sultan Al – Maqawali, was also present during this meeting. The Kuwait Foreign Minister had arrived in Islamabad only a day earlier, and delivered a message from the Emir of his country, Sheikh Sabah Al – Muaslim Al – Sabah, to the Prime Minister. Although some progress had been made towards starting negotiations, the new and sudden trick played by the Prime Minister in announcing the holding of a referendum had greatly upset the PNA leaders. Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb also appeared disgusted with the situation. However, the meeting between the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister and Mufti Mahmud helped to clear the atmosphere again.

On 17 May, the Foreign Minister of Iran. Hoshang Ansari, also came down to Islamabad and conveyed a message from the Shah to Mr. Bhutto urging him not to delay a patch – up with the opposition. On the other side, it had already been decided in the meeting at Sihala that Sardar Qayum would be set free the next day so that he could embark upon his special mission.

It was on 19 May that Sardar Qayum was released and he left for Karachi in an aircraft provided by the Government. The day after his arrival there, he met the leaders detained in the city and in the interior of the [province. The first person he contacted was Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani at Garhi Khario (Jacobabad) and had lunch with him. After that he went by car to Dadu where he met Prof. Ghafoor. Returning to Karachi in the evening by Chief Minister Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi’s special plane, he met Chardhry Zahur Ilahi the same night in the Central Jail. The next day, Saturday 21 May, he reached Lahore where he met Maulana Maudoodi. Later he flew across to Okara and met Asghar Khan. His talk with him continued for a very long time. The same night he again met Maulana Maudoodi after which he got back to Rawalpindi and submitted his report to Mufti Mahmud.

The deadlock created by the announcement about a referendum, even before the negotiations could be started, now appeared to be breaking. The report of Sardar Qayum was quite encouraging, as most of the leaders, except Asghar Khan, had agreed to start negotiations with the Government. The stand taken by Asghar Khan was that the letter he had written to the army officers would soon be producing positive results and that it would not be long before the Generals toppled the Bhutto government. As such, he insisted, it would be ridiculous to start any kind of negotiations with him. Instead, he stressed the need to intensify the agitation. All the same, Sardar Qayum succeeded in making him agree to the suggestion that if the Government releases all the detainees, and helps them assemble at one place, then a decision could be taken by concensus whether to hold negotiations or not. At the same time, Sardar Qayum brought to his notice the dangers that lay in military interference and requested him to desist from such a course. Nothing should be done, he pointed out, which could give a chance to the army to jump in.

On the night of 22 May, Sardar Qayum apprised Prime Minister Bhutto of all that had transpired. The next morning he left for Hyderabad where he met Wali Khan and Ghous Bux Bizenjo. While returning, he also met Chaudhry Zahur Ilahi at Karachi. On the other side, Pir Pagara met Begum Nasim Wali Khan the same day in Haripur jail.

Sardar Qayum returned to Rawalpindi the same night. Besides submitting a report on his mission to Mufti Mahmud, he also met the Saudi Arabian Ambassador and informed him of the developments.. on the morning of 23 May, he met Prime Minister Bhutto (I happened to be away on a single day's tour of Hyderabad). The Saudi Ambassador was also present when Sardar Qayum met Mr. Bhutto. The same day, Hani Al – Hassan, special envoy of the PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat, also arrived with a message for the Prime Minister in which Yasser Arafat had offered his services for bringing about a rapprochement.

Sardar Qayum later met Khan Asraf at Rawalpindi and Begum Nasim Wali Khan in Khanpur. On 25 May, Hani Al – Hassan met both Mufti Mahmud and Saudi Ambassador Riaz Al – Khateeb and expressed the hope that negotiations would start within the next 48 hours.

The part played by friendly countries during those crucial days in unprecedented. No other country can provide a similar example. Continuous riots had caused the destruction of ten and a quarter billion rupees worth of property. In such a situation, Sardar Qayum's success in his mission was most welcome news. Majority of the PNA leaders had given their consent to the holding of negotiations with the Government with equal number of participants from the two sides having been agreed upon. A formal announcement about the commencement was made by Sardar Qayum in a Press conference on 25 May.

Those days Sardar Qayum Sahib was the focus of attention of the entire Press. I remember Mr. Bhutto's remark during a meeting with him. "Sardar Sahib", he said, "these days it is either Nur Jahan who gets all the publicity or you!"

It was the Saudi Ambassador, Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb, who informed the Prime Minister about PNA's agreeing to the holding of negotiations, as it was he that they wanted to stand as surely.

Both the sides got busy with preparing an agenda. A special session of the Cabinet empowered Bhutto to go ahead with the negotiations. On 28 May, I proceeded to Peshawar to address a gathering of religious leaders scheduled for 30 May. In my speech, I appealed to them for help in creating a cordial atmosphere in the country. The same day I received a phone call from the Prime Minister asking me to come over immediately as Hafeez and I had to assist him at the negotiating table.

On arrival at Islamabad, the Prime Minister assigned me the duty of announcing at a Press Conference that the negotiations would start on Friday, 3 June.

Mr. Bhutto had already ordered the release of Begum Nasim Wali Khan. No pre – conditions had been set by either side with regard to the forthcoming negotiations. Mufti Mahmud had been orally informed that the negotiations would be held in the PM House on 3 June. In the Press conference I also made mention of the unforgettable role played by Saudi Arabia in getting the negotiations underway. Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb was being kept informed of every development.

On 31 May at 10 – 30 a.m. the Prime Minister also called for a special meeting of the military top brass. It was to be attended by the Chiefs of the three Services, the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, and the Crops Commanders. Hearing of another meeting with the top military echelon just before the commencement of negotiations made me feel very uneasy. Was the Prime Minister taking another somersault? I played with all my hearts – "O Lord, save this country, let no fresh problem crop up!"

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CHAPTER 14

THE GENERALS EXPOSED

Although we had been having joint meetings with the army Generals quite frequently, during which even the idea of holding a referendum was also discussed, besides talk of re – election, I normally confined myself to saying as little as possible. However, in a similar meeting held in May, I expressed my views in details.

In the previous meetings the Generals had accepted the notion of conducting a referendum, contending that hey would be able to sell the idea to the jawans. However after the PNA announced the boycott of the move, the position suddenly underwent a change. The Generals were now opposed to the referendum.

At the start of the meeting, the Prime Minister first asked Gen. Zia – ul – Haq to express his opinion. “Sir”, he said, “the idea of holding a referendum won’t work. It does not satisfy our jawans. And then even the opposition has rejected the idea.”

“Then what’s to be done? Asked Mr. Bhutto At this several of them expressed their opinion. However when it came to my turn, I just could not hold myself back; I came out with all that was in my heart. By then, I had quite some idea of the army’s intention and was bent upon exposing their game.

“There are five distinct possibilities of solving the problem,” I said, “The first is that the Government continues to hold power and you keep on supporting it. But now you fear that the jawans will refuse to open fire for maintaining law and order. The second alternative is that re – election should be ordered, for which even the Prime Minister is anxious, but your contention is that presently the emotions are high and polarisation is at such a pitch that polls will lead to bloodshed. The third alternative is for the Government to resign so that the PNA can take over the reins of office. Now you say this is not acceptable, as there are some among the PNA who are not loyal to the country. It is the fourth alternative - - holding of a referendum - - which was announced after your approval, but now you say that it won’t work, because it is not acceptable to the jawans and has been rejected by the PNA. Now all that is left is the fifth alternative according to which the Army should take over and you yourself should arrange elections when things become normal. Except this no other solution is possible which can cause the present turmoil to subside and satisfy your jawans.”

Before the commencement of this meeting I had neither mentioned to the Prime Minister what I was going to say nor did I know what his reaction would be to my views. However, as soon as I finished, he expressed his complete agreement with me. " I fully agree with Maulana," he said, "I accept that the only alternative now left is that the Army takes over. If you wish that way, I'm prepared to willingly surrender power and leave for Larkhana right today."

Gen. Zia, who had all this while remained silent, suddenly rose from his seat. Bending a little, he placed his hand over his heart. "No, sir, " he said, "We have no such intention. We are right arm of the Government. We are loyal and shall remain loyal."

After this assurance from Gen. Zia, the matter apparently appeared to have been settled. The meeting ended and they all went away. However, the Prime Minister signaled to Hafeez Pirzada and myself to follow him.

Getting to his private apartment, the three of us sat down on the chairs laid out on the lawn. The first to speak was Hafeez Pirzada. "Congratulations, sir," he said, "today's problem has been settled; the Army is totally behind you."

Mr. Bhutto turned towards me. "What's your opinion?" he asked.

"I don't agree with Hafeez" I said, "I feel the Army will definitely take over.

"How?" asked Mr. Bhutto.

"There are two reasons," I submitted, "the first being Gen. Zia's unusual gesture of getting to his feet and assuring you by placing his hand over his heart. I take that to be something like "The lady protests too much." It shows that these people are camouflaging their move. The second reason is that while you were speaking and saying that you are prepared to quite and leave for Larkhana, two generals who were till then resting their elbows on the table started nudging and giving meaningful looks to each other. All this goes to prove that something is brewing covertly."

"I agree with you," said Bhutto.

During the days when Mr. Bhutto was in preventive detention at Murree, he often used to say, "Friend, Zia could never have forgotten your speech of 31 May. You completely exposed those people that day!"

In para 47 of his statement on oath filed before the Lahore High Court during the hearing of the Nusrat Bhutto case, Mr. Bhutto wrote. "It is pertinent to point out here that in my meeting with the CMLA in Rawalpindi on 28 August, 1977, in which Gen. Chishti was present, the CMLA was excessively harsh on Mualana Kausar Niazi. In his characteristic fashion, he attacked the Maulana

mercilessly. He showed so much hatred for Niazi that at the end of the diatribe, the CMLA concluded by saying “This is one man I am not going to spare’. “(Reference Mr. Bhutto’s book, *My Pakistan,* published in Delhi).

This part of Mr. Bhutto’s statement on oath should be enough to open the eyes of those People’s Party activists who do not tire of cursing me at the instigation of the present Chairperson and Chairwoman. To them I am a confident of Army, and am so intimate with Gen. Zia that he eats out of my hand. I may also clarify that, at the time when Mr. Bhutto filed this affidavit., I had already been removed in a dictatorial manner by Begum Nusrat Bhutto from my positions of acting General Secretary of the Party, Secretary Information and member of the Executive Committee. Even my membership of the Party had been anulled.

The above mentioned part of Mr. Bhutto’s affidavit is in reply to the allegation leveled by the then Adviser for Internal Security, Lt. Gen. Ghulam Hussain, in a portion of his report to the CMLA under the heading “Internal Situation.” In that he had made insinuations against Mr. Bhutto, Hafeez Pirzada and myself, saying the first two were trying for a boycott of the election while I opposed them by urging participation in the election and avoiding a stalemate. The fact is that nothing like it ever transpired between us. That is why in paragraph 121 of his affidavit, Mr. Bhutto rightly declared that no member of the People’s Party can ever accept the truth of the statement that I was ever in favour of boycotting elections and precipitating a crisis. He further stated that he had been wrongly bracketed with Hafeez Pirzada as opposing Kausar Niazi. This is also an insinuation on Kausar Niazi and Hafeez Pirzada, as the later is just like a son to him and the former a wide awake person. Making such allegations against these two, he said, is like weaving a fairy tale.

With such statements of Mr. Bhutto’s on record, it is the height of injustice to allege that I am involved in intrigues with the Army: in fact it is being unjust to the late Bhutto himself. It is also known to all that throughout the period that Martial Law remained in force, and even after it was lifted. I was repeatedly offered a ministership, which I declined to accept strange though it may sound, but such offers started pouring in after a White Paper (which I call a black paper) was issued by the Government of Pakistan in 1979 recounting the misdeeds of Mr. Z.A. Bhutto, his family and colleagues. In this my name topped the list of such colleagues and a long list of allegations was appeneded to it. (Reference *“My Pakistan”*.)

The story of these allegations is rather interesting. Soon after the White Paper was issues I was summoned for enquiry at various levels. Getting my bank statements of the previous six years I was questioned about each and every cheque. The contractor of the house I had built in Islamabad, after selling my previous house and a printing press in Lahore was repeatedly summoned and interrogated about the payments made to him. When nothing come out of this

exercise, my previous Ministry started correspondence with me in the light of the allegations spelled out in the White Paper pertaining to financial matters. The letters I received are worth reading; I have preserved each one of them. The letter I wrote to the Ministry on 7 May 1979 evoked a reply on 24 January, 1983 -- after full four years. That was the last letter I received from the Government. Three years have passed since then, but the Government has not dared ask me to pay a single penny in the light of what was mentioned in the White Paper. It would be worthwhile to reproduce the last letter I wrote to the Government in this connection. If nothing else, it would serve to entertain the readers. It would also help them to assess what weight allegations carry which are levied in a White Paper without providing any opportunity to the person concerned to dispute them. Hereunder is the full text of my letter.

Dear Sir,

Asslamao alaikam wa Rahmatulla.

In response to my letter dated 7th May 1979, I am in receipt of your letter dated 24th January 1983 i.e. after four years. Please accept my congratulations on this efficiency of the Ministry. I regret to say that all the points brought to your attention in my letter not been commented upon in your reply.

1) I had stated that as per rights of a Minister, I was entitled to 15 days salary plus allowances, and house rent, etc. even after termination. You have not dilated on the issue. If you have any doubts, you can seek guidance from the Cabinet Division.

2) I had written that my personal radio and tape – recorder were fixed in the official car which can be confirmed from my chauffeurs. Messers Sher Din and Allah Din. You have confirmed the presence of the radio but have conveniently forgotten the tape recorder. Now after full six years is of no use to me now and I should be paid in lieu. Incidentally. I may also mention that all this while you could not even bother to send the radio across to my place but now want me to attend your court to receive it!

3) I had written that eight of my valuable albums are lying in my office which can be confirmed from Mr. Faiz, OSD, who was working in your Ministry at the time. These may be returned to me or else paid for together with demurrage. However, you have completely forgotten about this item in your reply.

4) Your demand for payments of Rs. 5800 / - can be settled after all that I have stated above is implemented.

5) So far as the issue of my purchasing Rs. 26000 / - worth of foreign exchange from the Haj Welfare Fund is concerned. I have already written about that in my letter of 19th May, 1979 which was received by your Duty Clerk on 20th

May 1979. It is requested that attention be paid once again to that letter in which I had written that the signatures be produced under which I have drawn that amount. In case someone else has received this amount in your office on my behalf. I do not stand responsible for it and the payment may be demanded from the person concerned. I had clearly written that I would await a photocopy of the concerned file but four years have elapsed and I have yet to receive it.

Kausar Niazi

What comes to my mind at the moment is that all these ‘generosities’ were showered upon me because of the speech I had delivered in that meeting of the Generals. Later, when we were arrested and brought to stay at Murree, Mr. Bhutto used to say, “Friend the generals can never forget your speech, that day they stood totally exposed.”

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P.P.P.'S DRAFT PACKAGE DURING NEGOTIATIONS

On the first June, 1977, Sheikh Riaz Al Khateeb met Mr. Bhutto and talked to him for about half an hour. He told him that the opposition wanted an assurance from him that Mr. Bhutto would not play any political trick during the negotiations, nor would the proceedings be made public Mr. Bhutto gave him full assurance and told him that he could pass the same on to the opposition on his personal behalf.

The truth is that it was the Saudi Ambassador who had paved the way for holding negotiations and was genuinely in the position of being called a mediator. It was his impartially and sincerity of purpose which made the PNA leaders accord all respect to his suggestions. Since Shaikh Zaid bin Sultan of UAE happened to be a personal friend of Mr. Bhutto, the PNA leaders considered his Ambassador to be partisan. Probably, his attitude also pointed to that direction. During one of his meetings with Mufti Mahmud the two had quite a heated discussion leading to the Mufti telling him not to come round again. Similarly, by virtue of being another friend of Mr. Bhutto's, the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister also could not play a worthwhile role. It was only Sheikh Riaz Al Khateeb who was equally sincere to both sides. After his meeting with Mr. Bhutto he went straight to Sihala and gave every kind of assurance demanded by Mufti Mahmud. His meeting with him lasted for over and half hour during which Pir Sahib Pagara Sharif, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan and Sardar Abdul Qayum were present. Sheikh Riaz Al Khateeb also informed them that Mr. Bhutto would be assisted by Kausar Niazi and Hafeez Pirzada in the course of negotiations. As such Mufti Sahib also gave him the names of his aides so that they could be released from detention the next day.

It after consultations with his colleagues that Mufti Sahib gave the names of Nabawzada Nusrullah Khan and Prof. Gahfoor Ahmed as those who would be assisting him. However, he insisted that the basis of the negotiations should be the same as agreed upon during the meeting with Mr. Bhutto on 8 May.

On Thursday, 2 June, I was scheduled to furnish details about the forthcoming negotiations in a Press briefing. However, I was in a quandary when I heard of the condition laid down by PNA leaders that nothing is to be made public till such time as an agreement is reached. In the opinion of the Prime Minister and myself, the public needed to be kept informed of how the negotiations were proceeding so that the generals, so eager to usurp power,

could be kept at bay. This point was brought to the notice of the PNA stalwarts as well but, unfortunately, each of those among them had his own opinion in the matter; they hardly ever agreed on any issue. So far as Asghar Khan is concerned, he was totally averse to the idea and had even sent a message from jail saying that there was no need to hold negotiations with the Government as the Army would soon be assuming power, after which it would announce the holding of elections within 90 days. This can be confirmed from Prof. Ghafoor Ahmed, Nawabzada Nasurllah Khan and Sardar Qayum. Sometime before his death, Mufti Mahmud had openly said in statement that Asghar Khan had close relations with Generals and that it was the who had got Martial Law imposed.

On 2 June, the Federal Cabinet met in the PM House and remained in session for five hours. As such it was late in the night that I met the journalists who were anxious to convey the good news to the public about commencement of negotiations the next day. In this connection, I have no hesitation in acknowledging that at that critical time the national Press completely designed from publishing any speculative stories which could retard the progress of talks between the Government and PNA, or could help pave the way for Martial Law. All that I could tell them that night was that the negotiation were getting underway because of the efforts of Saudi Arabia, I added that the opposition leaders were very careful in their approach, and were also suspicious and apprehensive. As regard their demands. I told them that these included re-election, formation of a new Election Commission and Mr. Bhutto's resignation, but they had no answer to the question as to who would assume power if Mr. Bhutto resigned. I told the pressmen that the Saudi Ambassador was being kept informed of all develomanets.

After their release from detention that day, Mufti Mahmud and Nabawzada Nasurllah Khan called on Sheikh Riaz at his residence and again sought a guarantee from him that Mr. Bhutto would remain sincere with regard to the negotiations. On the other hand, Prof. Ghafoor left for Lahore to apprise the leaders of his Party, Maulana Maudoodi, of the developments and seek his guidance. He left a message that he would be back in Islamabad the next morning before the start of negotiations. The same evening, on the advice of the Prime Minister, President Fazal Ilahi Chaudhry summoned the National Assembly to meet for the Budget Session on Monday at p.m.

After the first session of talks ended on 3 June, orders for immediate release of Asghar Khan, Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani and Khan Ashraf were issued. This was in acceptance of the PNA's demand. The other demands accepted were the lifting of censorship from newspaper, release of all those arrested under Section, payment of compensation to all those killed or injured during the agitation, and stopping one sided propaganda over radio and television. In response to this generous acceptance of all their demands the PNA agreed to suspend its agitation during the period the negotiations remained in progress and the ultimate result became khown.

After the session ended, Prof. Ghafoor and myself briefed the Press in the auditorium of PM House. The joint statement based on the above – mentioned acceptance of demands was read out by Prof. Ghafoor. "Are both sides satisfied now?" asked a newsman. "Yes," I said, "they are satisfied."

Considering Prof. Ghafoor's silence to be semi agreement with my answer (as they say in Persian), the newsman posed the same question to him. He had no option but to say, "All's well."

The negotiations had started at 4 – 30 p.m. during which Interior Secretary M.A.K. Chaudhry was summoned to provide information about the destainess. Gen. Zia – ul – Haq was also called for consultation on matters of defence but he did not get an opportunity to say much.

The next round of talks was scheduled for 6 June. Two days before that (4 June). Mr. Bhutto gave his acceptance to all those proposals which I had submitted to him in April. (These had later been endorsed by the Cabinet as well). As such, the Ministry of Religious Affairs made an announcement that very day that the Council of Islamic Ideology had been reconstituted and that it would bring all laws in conformity with Islamic teachings within six months and submit its report to the Government. After that the draft would be presented in the National Assembly for acceptance so that it becomes law.

Mr. Justice Haleem was nominated as the new Chairman of the Council, with other to assist him being Professor Sheikh Muhammad Mustafa Alzarqa of Shariat College, Damascus, Dr. Maruf Aldwalibi of Madina University, Dr. Hamidullah from Paris (the same known scholar who wrote the speech for Gen. Zia – ul – Haq which he delivered in the General Assembly of United Nations as representative of the Islamic world), a scholar of 'fiqh' from Al – Azhar University an authority on Islamic law from Libya and one scholar from Qum University of Iran well versed in Fiqh – e – Jafaria (Shiite Law). Those nominated as regular members of the Council were: Maulana Ehtisham – ul Haq Thanvi, Maulana Ghulam Ghuas Hazarvi, Maulana Zafar (a leader of Idara – I – Tahaffaz – I – Huqooq – Shia), Allama Naseer Al – Ijtihadi, Maulana Abdul Ala Maudoodi, Maulana Mufti Mahmud and Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani. It was evident from the composition of the Islamic Ideology Council that it was fully capable of unanimously formulating an Islamic system of justice which would be acceptable to the public. However, it is regrettable, that those most vociferous for the enforcement of Nizam – e Mustafa - - the PNA - - failed to avail this rare opportunity, so much so that the last mentioned there even refused to sit as members of the Council. It is probably because of this very show of non cooperation on their part that for the next ten they had to keep listening to sermons on Gen. Zia – ul – Haq's Islam with not a single practical step taken towards enforcing it.

On 5 June, that is a day before the second round of negotiations was to start, Prof. Ghafoor told the journalists in talk at the Press Club that the PNA desired early success of the negotiations, but he did not say why. In this connection all that he mentioned was that they had to consult Asghar Khan and Noorani.

The fact is that no consultation were involved. They only wanted to contact Asghar Khan, Mualana Shah Ahmed Noorani and Begum Nasim Wali Khan and request them to remain mum. According to our information, Asghar Khan, Begum Nasim Wali, Sardar Sher Baz Mazari and Mualana Shah Ahmed Noorani were not in favour of negotiations with the Government and were repeatedly insisting that the PNA should better wait for Martial Law to be imposed. Such insistence from their side continued right upto the night of 4 July, when the PNA had its last meeting at a dinner hosted by Sardar Qayum at his residence. During this meeting even hot words were exchange between Asghar Khan and Prof. Ghafoor. From the very first day Asghar Khan had been trying to sabotage the negotiating team. He was sore that he had neither been chosen as the head of PNA nor included in the panel to conduct the negotiations. As such he openly declared that he would "not accept any agreement which you people may reach with Bhutto". At time Sardar Qayum, Prof. Ghafoor and Mufti Mahmud did give some indication of the problems they were facing because of inner dissension.

Negotiations were resumed at 11 a.m. on 6 June and continued for three hours without any break. As usual, Hafeez Pirzada and myself assisted Mr. Bhutto, while those with Mufti Mahmud were Nawabzada Nasurllah Khan and Prof. Ghafoor. During this session two proposals for settlement of the problem came under discussion, and it was arrived at. Both these formulas were expressed to declare the elections of 7 March to be null and void and to order fresh polls, and in the second the idea of holding fresh elections in the dispute constituencies was put forward. The PNA asked for a list of all those under arrest which was promised for the next day. The PNA was also informed that in the light of what had transpired on 3 June, 2000 persons had already been released. The problem with PNA negotiating team was the same as before - - it was not in a position to take a decision! As such they carried both the formulas with them so that they could consult the other leaders. Addressing a joint Press conference that afternoon, Prof. Ghafoor said, "There will be no unconstitutional decision". However, in reply to a question from a foreign correspondent, I said, "If agreement is reached on any one of the formulas, necessary amendments will be made in the Constitution. However, that will be with full agreement of the two sides."

The same evening, the People's Party Parliamentary Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Bhutto. In this meeting, the Chairman told the members about the latest development in the negotiations, and the two formulas he had put forth. The members unanimously empowered him to take any decision he deemed proper. Alas! If only Mufti Mahmud had a similar mandate from the PNA!

The same evening commenced the Budget Session of the National Assembly.

Mian Tuufail Muhammad also reached Rawalpindi that day. He called upon the Saudi Ambassador as well as the Ambassador of Kuwait, Yusuf Abdul Latif Abdul Razzaq.

In the round of negotiations on 7 June, the PNA gave its acceptance to the formula for holding elections anew. Consequently, the other formula was dropped. To work out the relevant details, a sub - committee was formed with Prof. Ghafoor and Hafeez Pirzada as its members. It was charged with the task of making arrangements for the holding of fresh elections, and to have the necessary amendment made in the Constitution. It was agreed that its first meeting would be held that very day. At the same time, Mufti Mahmud, Nawabzada Nasurllah Khan and Prof. Ghafoor informed us about the real intention of Asghar Khan and how some persons in their ranks were looking forward to the imposition of Martial Law. As such they did not want the agreement to be delayed.

After the session I announced to the newsmen, right there in the PM House, that the Martial Law in Karachi and Hyderabad had been lifted and all those arrested under it were being released. There was a total of 12,900 such persons. Cases registered against them were withdrawn and all sentences remitted.

During the negotiations, the PNA had demanded the holding of fresh elections by October, where as our connection was that a period of at least one year should be allowed so that the bitterness which had spread all over may subside and the elections held in a peaceful atmosphere.

In a meeting of the PNA held the previous night, Asghar Khan absented himself, leaving Malik Wazir Ali to represent him. He was just not prepared to give any importance to the negotiations, and his entire interest was in the imposition of Martial Law. The same day he threatened in a Press conference as Peshawar that if all those arrested were not released immediately he would launch a forceful agitation all by himself. However, the fact is that the demand for release of the arrested persons was merely an excuse and his entire effort was devoted to making ways and means of sabotaging the negotiations and paving a path for himself away from the PNA. Meanwhile, Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani came up with another story. Addressing a public meeting the same day in Darul – Uloom Islamia Rehmani at Haripur, he said “Bhutto’s resignation is our vital demand,” adding that the agitation would be resumed with full force if the negotiations failed.

This was a highly anomalous situation. On one hand the negotiating team was having talks with Bhutto, accepting him as Prime Minister, sitting in the PM House itself, and making no demand for his resignation; and on the other, two main stalwarts of the Alliance were treading their own path demanding Bhutto's resignation and threatening dire consequences. It was the gift of this very behaviour that Asghar Khan had to suffer a detention of five years under Martial Law, while Maulana Noorani saw his party splitting into pieces during that period. Zahur – ul – Hassan Bhopali and Haji Hanif Tayyab caused incalculable harm to him, and created cracks in his citadels of Karachi and Hyderabad, much to the advantage of Jamaat – I – Islami.

The PNA gathered all its legal advisers in Rawalpindi to finalise the draft of a formula for the elections before the meeting of the sub – committee was held. Consequently, in the meeting held in the State Bank Building on 8 June, Prof. Ghafoor placed before Hafeez Pirzada the draft prepared by the 11 – member team of legal experts. One look at it and Pirzada seemed lost! All minor details had been spelled out in the draft. These included; the date of elections, election machinery for the purpose, shape and scope of the Election Commission, regulations to eliminate chances of rigging, composition of the interim provincial and central governments following the dissolution of the Assemblies, and amendments in the Constitution. Till then Hafeez Pirzada had probably not given as much attention to these issues as had been devoted by Mahmud Ali Kasuri and S.M. Zafar. The result was that the sub – committee could not take any decision on several points. It, therefore, left the dispute issue for discussion at the higher level meeting.

Prof. Gahfoor met the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and gave them all the details of their demands. At the same time Mufti Mahmud openly told the newsmen that without adequate safeguards, elections would not be acceptable to them. Once bitten, twice shy!

Mufti Mahmud also met the Saudi Ambassador together with Nawabzada Nasurllah Khan and shah Ahmed Nooran. The meeting lasted for over an hour. This was his first contact with Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb since the beginning of the negotiations. Mufti Mahmud told him that he would in no case attend the current session of the National Assembly. He also made a public appeal for special prayers on Friday for acceptance of their demands. On his part, Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb informed King Khalid on telephone about the latest developments and added that some hitch appeared to be coming up.

In my personal opinion, had Hafeez Pirzada not been outwitted by the legal experts of the PNA, and, keeping in view their expertise, had also prepared himself accordingly, the deadlock as it surfaced sop openly during the negotiations on 9 June, would not have been created. During the top level session Prof. Ghafoor stuck to the clauses regarding election guarantees and Hafeez Pirzada kept rebutting them. Consequently, differences kept widening, so

much so that Mufti Mahmud threatened not to attend the session the next day unless the differences were resolved right away. Even Mr. Bhutto was confused by the long list of guarantees presented by the PNA. The atmosphere in this session remained extremely tense. As such, at the joint Press conference after the session, when a journalist asked me, “How far are you from reaching an agreement now?”, I replied, “As far as you are from me!” The distance between the journalist in question and myself happened to be about 300 feet!

The day, Nawabzada Nasurllah Khan did not participate in the negotiations. He left that Hafeez Pirzada was only creating complications and Mr. Bhutto was trying to while away time by prolonging the game being played by Hafeez. Had Mr. Bhutto referred the issues regarding election guarantees to the legal and constitutional experts available with in the Party, instead of leaving them to the whims of the bureaucrats sitting in the Ministry of Law, the matter would not have been prolonged that extent.

Right on the same day, Ghulam Mustafa Khan left the Muslim League and announced his joining the People’s Party again Mr. Bhutto forthwith appointed him his Political Adviser. In his first statement after appointment, he appealed to all friends for unity to meet the threat of anti – national forces and to strengthen the hands of Mr. Bhutto.

Knowing the temperament of Mustafa Khar, the PNA leaders were startled. It immediately came to them that Mr. Bhutto would soon be launching a campaign of harassment through him. The very name, Mustafa Khar, was enough to strike terror in the minds of the PNA leaders. They apprehended a new wave of confrontation now that Bhutto had brought him in the field. They were so scared of this development that as soon as he took the oath as Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs, a PNA leader, Anwer Javed, filed a writ petition against his appointment in the Lahore High Court. This was on 28 June.

During an address to the Rawalpindi Bar Association on 11 June, Asghar Khan threateningly said that the masses were not prepared to wait any longer for the negotiations to conclude. He also referred to such actions as jamming the wheels. On his part, Prof. Ghafoor, while addressing a Press conference also expressed his extreme dissatisfaction with the prevailing state of affairs. Mufti Mahmud, Nawabzada Nusrllah Khan and Ashraf Khan met Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb and complained that Hafeez Pirzada was airing some disputed matters at the instigation of Mr. Bhutto, and that the Government’s intentions were doubtful.

The same evening Hafeez Pirzada presented the Budget in the Assembly for discussion. It is possible that he could not pay enough attention to the proposals put up by the PNA because of his preoccupation with the Budget the preparation of which consumed a lot of his time.

On Saturday, 12 June, Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb met both Mr. Bhutto and Mufti Mahmud separately during which he stressed upon them the need to arrive at an immediate agreement on the basis of give – and – take. The same day, the Kuwaiti Ambassador also met the Prime Minister.

At 5 – 30 in the evening started the sixth session of negotiations. During this, replies were offered, as drafted by the Law Ministry, to the Points raised by the PNA. Mufti Mahmud took this draft with him for consideration in their own high level meeting. He said the reply would be furnished in the session scheduled for the next day.

Our future course of action now depended upon their response; only then could a final decision be taken. It was, however, expected that some solution would be evolved by the day as the second draft of agreement presented by the Government was by way of an all – out effort to break the deadlock. All the same, it seems that the threats openly meted out by Asghar Khan were hanging like a sword over the heads of the PNA leaders. That is probably why they wanted to have their own demands accepted without any alteration. Although we were very well aware of their helplessness, yet we did not have any solution for that.

Th draft of the agreement presented by the Government to the PNA on 12 June is reproduced below in full.

ACCORD

This Accord arrived at between Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party, hereinafter mentioned as the First Party, and Maulana Mufti Mahmud, MNA elect and President of the Pakistan National Alliance, hereinafter mentioned as the Second Party, recites as follows: -

Where as a political crisis had arisen in Pakistan following the first general elections held in the month of March, 1977;

AND WHEREAS the Parties to the Accord in their individual and representative capacity were desirous of finding a peaceful solution.

AND WHEREAS talks were held by the parties to the Accord in their representative capacity wherein the first Party was assisted by Mr. Abdul Hafeez Pirzada and Maulana Kausar Niazi and the second Party was assisted by Nawabzada Nasurllah Khan and Prof. Ghafoor Ahmed;

AND WHEREAS the first Party had with a view to establishing normal and peaceful conditions Pakistan ordered the release of all the leaders of Pakistan

National Alliance; lifted Martial Law within the Division of Karachi and the District of Lahore and Hyderabad; announced compensation to all such persons who had not lost their lives or received grievous injuries, lifted pre – censorship on newspapers, allowed public meetings and procession released all persons arrested for violation of orders under section 144 of the code of Criminal Procedure or our few orders as well as all such other persons (excluding 524 persons) in custody on substantive charges of crimes;

AND WHEREAS the Second Party had agreed to call off agitation following the first general elections held in the month of March 1977,

AND WHEREAS with a view to restoration of congenial atmosphere, mutual confidence and tranquility necessary for honest, just and fair elections, the parties have arrived at an Accord. The terms of the Accord shall be as follows: -

1. The National Assembly of Pakistan and the Provincial Assemblies of the four Provinces shall be dissolution on ________. The National Assembly shall before its dissolution pass such amendments in the Constitutional and other enactment as are necessary in pursuance of this Accord.

2. The Provincial Governments consisting of the Chief Minister and the Ministers in the four Provinces of Pakistan shall cases to hold office on the date mentioned in paragraph 1. Consequential amendment shall be made in the Constitution to provide for powers to the Government as nearly as may be in accordance with the provision of Article 234 of the Constitution.

3. Elections to the National Assembly shall be held on October 7, 1977, and to the four Provincial Assemblies on the same day or within three days of the elections to the National Assembly.

4. Such members of the Senate who are does to retire on August 5, 1977, shall continue to be member until the said date. Of the reminding members of the Senate such members as have been elected by the National Assembly or the Provincial Assemblies after the first general elections would be resign their seats after the new National Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies are elected in accordance with paragraph 3.

5. All persons detained or arrested after January 6, 1977, in connection with agitation and disturbances under all laws including laws relating to preventive detention as have not already been released shall be released forthwith who are accused of heinous off once including murder, loot, rape and arson shall not be released. However, a committee consisting of one representative of each party shall examine the cases against them to determine whether any of them may be released.

6. Any difference of opinion between the members of the committee refused to in paragraph 5 shall be referred to the Implementation Council.

7. Personable compensation shall be paid to all such persons who as a result of agitation or disturbance after 6th March, 1977 received grievous injuries or suffered destruction or damage to their property and in like manner responsible compensation shall be paid top the legal heirs of such person who lost their lives in such agitation of disturbances. The compensation shall be fixed by the Government of Pakistan and such compensation shall be determine and paid regardless of party affiliation of person who died or received grievous injuries or suffered destruction or damage to property.

8. On the signing of this accord, emergency imposed under Article 232 read with Article 280 of the Constitution shall be lifted.

9. On the signing of the Accord, the Defence of Pakistan Ordinance shall be repealed together with the rules framed and orders issued thereunder, provided that the provision relating to enemy property and the requisition of property shall be continued in force.

10. On the signing of this Accord, all Tribunal established and functioning under the Defence of Pakistan Ordinance shall cases to functions, and the cases pending before the Tribunals shall stand transferred to the normal courts of the country for trial under the ordinary law.

11. On the signing of this Accord, amendments made in the Pakistan Army Act on April 21, 1977, by Act No.1 of 1977 shall be replaced without prejudice to the appeals that may be pending in or may arise.

12. The Armed Forces deployed in parts of the Province of Balochistan shall cases to act in add of civil power after a periods of four months of the signing of the Accord.

13. The Representation of the People Act shall be so amended as to provide-

(a) For the abatement of all election petitions filled and pending as a result of the election held in the month of March, 197.

(b) That the result of the ensuing elections shall not be published by Radio Pakistan, Pakistan TV Corporation and the newspapers, before the announcement by the Election Commission.

(c) For the Armed Forces of Pakistan and the civil armed forces including the police being called by the Federal Government to render aid and Assistance to the Commission for maintenance of law and order during the election campaign and the polls.

14. The parties to this Accord shall prepare or cause to be prepared a Code of Ethics within a week of the spinning of this Accord and such code shall provide for –

(a) Rules for election campaign,
(b) Protection to Lawful political activity during the election campaign,
(c) Rules for the conduct of the press, radio and TV during the election campaign.
(d) The freedom of press including restriction of declaration of newspaper the publication whereas has been banned
(e) Arrest detention or prosecution of any person committing of force during election campaign.
(f) Holding of public meetings and processions during the election campaign, and
(g) Ensuring impartially and convenient balance in the projection of news and views by media controlled or owned by the Government in accordance with the law declared by Supreme Court of Pakistan.

15. The Constitution of Pakistan shall be so seemed as to –

(a) Incorporation the amendment enumerated in the schedule.
(b) Provide for reconstitution of the Election Commission in accordance with paragraphs 16 and 17.

16. The Election Commission shall consist of a chairman and four members. The Chairman shall be a person having the same qualifications as are stated in Article 213 of the Constitution and one member shall be appointed from among the judges of each High Court. The appointment shall be made by the resident of Pakistan on the advice of the First Party tendered after consultation with the Second Party.

17. A new Chief Election Commission shall be appointed.

18. In case a difference or dispute arises between the parties to this Accord in implementation of the terms, the same shall be resolved by the Implementation Council to be constituted under paragraph 19.

19. The Implementation Council shall consist of 10 members including the Chairman and the composition and procedure of the Implementation Council shall be regulated as stated here in below: -

(a) Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the Prime Minister of the Pakistan, shall be the Chairman of the Council.

(b) In the absence of the chairman of the council from any meeting thereof Maulana Mufti Mahmud shall act as the chairman of the meeting.

(c) Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Maulana Mufti Mahmud shall each nominates 4 persons on the Council from amongst members of the Parliament or member – elect to the National Assembly at the first general election.

(d) The unanimous decisions of the Council shall be implemented by the First Party, by exercise of his executive powers as Prime Minister.

20. The Implementation Council shall oversee the holding of elections so that the same are conducted in an honest, just and fair manner. The Implementation Council can take cognizance of all or any matters connected with or related to the election suo moto or on complaint by any member.

21. In case the Implementation Council fails to arrive at a unanimous decision the matter shall be referred for arbitration to the Supreme Court.

22. In relation to all such matters as are referred to in paragraph 21 the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to decide the dispute. The Chief Justice may nominate himself as one of the arbitrators.

23. The arbitrators appointed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan under paragraph 22 shall bear the nominees of the two parties to this Accord and decide the dispute within 72 hours. No party shall be represented by a legal practitioner. All proceedings before the arbitrators shall be held in camera.

24. While hearing a dispute, the arbitration shall not be bound to record any evidence but they shall briefly record the reasons for their decision.

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CHAPTER 16

ON THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA

The session scheduled for Monday 13 June was crucial. There were clear indications of the negotiations breaking down, and each side was trying that it should not have to shoulder the blame. The issues agreed upon included the lifting of emergency, release of prisoners and appointments of provincial governors with approval of the PNA. The demand for reconstitution of the Election Commission was also accepted, and there was hardly any difference of opinion about dissolution of the Assemblies.

One of the issue on which the two sides differed was the date of the next elections. PNA wanted these to be held within forty days, where as we, considering the administrative problems involved, did not think them feasible before November or December.

The main problem with the PNA's negotiation team was that they were not in a position to take any decision on their own or to affix their signatures to the agreement. They would out off every point on the plea that they had to consult their colleagues and could only furnish a reply after that. On top of that they also wanted to carry some documents with them to satisfy their colleagues and keep their face before the people. Had this fear of colleagues not haunted them constantly, they could have reached an agreement with the government much earlier. Their helplessness was evident from the fact that they could not deviate from the points written down for them by the PNA Council, nor give any kind of assurance on any related issue. After one of the sessions, Prof. Ghafoor expressed his disgust in this regard. "What can we do?" He said, our hands are tied. You can't imagine what treatment we get from the hardliners in our ranks. They look at us as if we would negotiate some deal with you behind their backs."

Sardar Sher Baz Mazari, Begum Nasim Wali Khan and Asghar Khan were the hardliners among the PNA, with Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani having a tilt towards them. The first demand on which the first mentioned three were most insistent was the withdrawal of troops from Balochistan. Their second demand was that the Hyderabad Tribunal be quashed, and Wali Khan, and others arrested, be tried in an open court. Out of all the 32 points in the PNA's charter of demands, these two were the most tricky. It was on this chessboard that the Generals had planned their moves.

Besides the Chief of Army Staff, Zia – ul – Haq, most of the Crops Commanders were deadly against disbanding the Hyderabad Tribunal and withdrawing the army from Balochistan. They were just not prepared to listen to the Prime Minister that he would be accepting these demands. This was the main pressure on Prime Minister Bhutto.

On the other side, the hardliners in the PNA were vehemently insisting on the acceptance of these demands; that was their first priority. As such when Prof. Ghafoor remorsefully explained his position to Mr. Bhutto, the PM asked him to convey the message to Sardar Sher Baz Mazari and Begum Wali Khan that he wished to meet them in private. He probably wanted to counsel patience and ask the two of them to first allow signing of the agreement so that the pressure being exerted on him by the Generals is released. He wanted to tell them that on the one hand the Generals were insisting that a political settlement be arrived at, and on the other were not allowing him to accept their demands on any account. He wanted to assure Mazari and Begum Nasim that soon as conditions returned to normal after signing the agreement he would not only withdraw the army from Balochistan but also wind up the Hyderabad Tribunal and other trial of all those arrested in the ordinary courts. He wanted the hardliners to help release for once the pressure being exerted upon him by the Generals at the time.

Mr. Bhutto had now come to realise that he had committed the biggest blunder of his tenure by bringing the army into the field to aid the civil administration, and by imposing selective Martial Law.

So far as I am concerned, I was totally against such a step from the very first day and had always insisted that the demand for re – elections be accepted. However, this was objected top both by the Generals and by Hafeez Pirzada. The beauty is that the contention of both was identical - - that “it would lead to bloodshed in the country.” However, it is worth mentioning here that the Chief Minister of Sindh, Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, had vehemently opposed the imposition of Martial Law in Karachi and Hyderabad. Earlier, he had told the Prime Minister during a Cabinet meeting, that the agitation was losing its intensity in Sindh, and hence Martial Law need not be imposed as that would unnecessarily offer a chance to the Generals to meddle in politics and taste the fruits of power. However, at that time, the Prime Minister had full faith in the Generals, especially in the Chief of the Army Staff. That faith would become manifold when Gen. Zia – ul – Haq, in his typical soft and humble manner, would assure him of the army’s and his own utmost loyalty.

Although the Prime Minister was completely snared in the net of these delightful utterance, yet, at times, the attitude of the Generals made him suspicious. It appeared that the significance of Jatoi’s advice had now dawned upon him. That is why he was going to the extent of sending an offer to Begum Nasim Wali Khan and Mazari that as soon as law and order was restored in the country, not only would both their demands be accepted but their dismissed

governments in the Frontier and Balochistan would also be restored. However, now Naism Wali or Mazari were not even prepared to talk to him. When they informed the PNA high command about the message Prof. Ghafoor had brought, Asghar Khan strictly forbade them from meeting Bhutto, Mufti Mahmud had also to adopt the same stance and stopped both of them from meeting him. Not only that, he presented the same demands to Mr. Bhutto with added force saying that unless those two basic demands were acceded to no agreement was possible.

This was the crucial turn in the session held on 13 June. The atmosphere was extremely tense when it ended.

The same day Chairman Bhutto issued instructions for the party workers to hold conventions all over the country. He instructed the Party Secretary – General, Dr. Ghulam Hussain, to presides over these conventions - - on the 21st at Quetta, on the 26th at Peshawar, on the 28th at Multan and on 8th July at Karachi. through this exercise, Bhutto wanted to make a show of his 'mass strength', thereby sounding a warning to the Generals that he still enjoyed such popularity and mass support that he had the capability of crushing anyone vying for his seat. However, he was forgetting that he no longer had with him the organisational ability and resourcefulness of a friend like Ghulam Mustafa Khar. He was the one who, relying on the People's Party's mass popularity, had single-handedly broken the back of the police strike and forced the bureaucracy and other aspirants to power hide their faces. At that juncture, neither did any of the PPP ministers and leaders have the potential of becoming a Malik Ghulam Mustafa Khar, nor did Bhutto, after having fallen into the trap of the bureaucracy, enjoy the mass support which had brought him to power. And so far as the People's Party itself was concerned, it had never been organised as 'party'; at no level were elections held to enable the true leaders top emerge. There were nominations all the way, with those nominated hardly ever paying any attention to the workers or the general public. They were nothing but servants dancing to the tune of the master without being able to distinguish between a warranted and an unwarranted order. After all, they had no fear of being taken to task. Consequently, all such nominated characters did the disappearing trick when the agitation brewed up, and most of these 'public representatives' who had managed to get into the Assemblies through dubious means were no way in a position to control their constituencies. The Pakistan Peoples Party had all along been a crowd of votes attracted by the magic of Mr. Bhutto's personality. After his assumption of power it was virtually non – existent as a party. Mr. Bhutto was now realising how essential it was to have organised it properly. Those enjoyed positions through nomination had bolted upon the sweet will of the Generals or else on reaching an agreement with the PNA.

Before the eight session on 14 June, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, called a meeting of the army's top echelon in the PM House. As usual, Hafeez Pirzada and I were with him. To start with the Prime Minister asked the Crops

Commanders to give their report about the situation in their respective areas. After that, with full confidence." He then briefly dilated upon justification of having conferences with the Generals and tries to impress upon them it was not out of helplessness that he was reposing his trust in them. What he said further is reproduced below, verbatim:

"I am fully aware of my powers; you must remember that I can order the army. I did consult you about the referendum, but only because I do not want to impose a solution which you do not consider to be proper. That would not produce the desired results. I desire national concensus and you also happen to be a part of the nation. And then, I don't suffer from any complex. I don't feel shy talking to army Generals because I know you for the last ten years. I don't feel embarrassed in consulting you. When I talked to you about the referendum it may have given you the feeling that I would emerge all the more powerful. You wanted a political solution - - I said, all right. Each one of you was enthusiastically in favour of negotiations. I, therefore, told Mufti in the very first session that I am not talking to a foreign delegation, that you people are our elders and brothers. I am not an extremist; I am liberal. As such it did not take me a minute to accept what they said. I accepted each one of their demands whatever the price I will have to pay for that. Producing result is beyond my power. Some contradictions. Peace will be destabilised. But it is certain that after the elections no one will accept the army's interference as they would be having a fresh mandate. Moreover, they will not be exposed all that quickly although they would quarrel among themselves like the 'Janta'. That would be bad for the country but the army wouldn't be able to do anything about it. The only way out is that the army takes over now. But this is no a bed of roses. When I met Yahya after he had taken over, I made it clear to him that he was in a precarious position. He said, "What's politics? Commonsense! And the bureaucracy says that I have political foresight, that I had said that was 1969; now it is 1977. Even at that time I had said that the second Martial Law was always weaker than the first …. And the third would be still weaker. Weak in the sense that firstly you won't be able to shoot anyone, and if you do, then remember, that is the worst kind of weakness. Today, there is awakening all over the world. It will also be said that the Punjabi army is running the Government. The other provinces will be estranged. There would be pressure on you about the cease-fire line in Kashmir. You will face problems on the issue of the reprocessing plant. It is only a political government which can deal with such matters, not the army. The major powers will also come up with the question that in proportion to the population why is the ratio of forces so high? But I do not mean to say that I alone am the solution to all problems. No, I am trying to find on honourable solution by talking to the opposition and I am positive that I will succeed."

Every word of the Prime Minister's speech was in the style of an experienced diplomat. He very successfully implanted his inner thoughts in the mind of the Generals. I noticed that a hush had fallen over them.

The short silence was broken by Gen. Zia – ul – Haq. “Sir,” he said, “you are the one who has done the most for the army. The army is in no way a third party; we have earned a bad name in the opposition camp. That goes to our credit. It proves that we are with the Government.”

As he finished, the Crops Commander of Lahore, Gen. Iqbal, spoke up. “The army is praying for the success of the negotiations. The agitation has stopped for the time being. But if the negotiations fail, it will start again. There’ll be bomb blasts, there’ll be firing. The Democratic Youth Forces is getting instruction from Asghar Khan. It will be impossible to deploy the army in Lahore again. The people won’t accept that. There will be external threats as well. The Indian army can cross our borders while our units will be busy inside the city. There’ll be cracks in the army if we ask it to shoot. It may also lead to mutual tension. The opposition has been working in this direction for a long time. Retired military officers are taking part in the agitation. There are relatives of the Soldiers as well. The election campaign has also had its effect in the junior ranks. There is no ‘fire in the air’ in the army, and yet it was done despite orders. As such we wish with all our hearts that the negotiations may succeed.”

Next to express his opinion was Gen. Arbab Jehanzeeb, Crops Commander, Karachi. “Everyone wants the negotiations to succeed, whatever way it is done,” he said. “The present position is that we have no control over the lower ranks. So far as the junior officers are concerned they will obey us, but unwillingly. The senior staff is no problem, but even they desire a political settlement. If that is not done, the army will not be able to enter the lanes and streets. Both sides are armed. In the case of a deadlock, both will have to be disengaged. We cannot see across to the Iranian side, but in Balochistan, there will be no trouble. There would be lot of problems in Sindh if the rural areas join the agitation. You must achieve success in the negotiations by whatever means, but the prisoners in Hyderabad should never be released. They are confirmed anti nationals and traitors.”

After him Gen. Ghulam Hussain spoke up. “Everyone is praying for the success of the negotiations,” he said. “Prolonged involvement is against the integrity of the army. If the agitation starts again it would be much more violent, and external threat is besides that.”

Winding up the discussion, Mr. Bhutto said, “So it is clear that you want an accord. I am hopeful we’ll find a political solution. You also pray (for it)”.

The session of negotiation commenced at five in the evening. Mufti Mahmud informed us that the PNA wanted elections to be held before 14 August, and that he would be bale to give a firm date the next day. Both sides were in agreement about the holding of fresh elections, the only dispute that soon as the agreement was arrived at all those arrested would be released. We suggested that the date of elections be fixed for some time after Ramazan.

Since the PNA team had to convey the proceedings of the session to its high command, it was decided to meet the next evening.

The same night Saudi Ambassador Sheikh Riaz – Al Khateeb met Prime Minister Bhutto and expressed satisfaction at the progress of the talks.

Some newsmen managed to accost Mufti Mahmud that day and he perforce to say that the PNA wanted elections to be held before 14 August. He added, “The date will be decided today, and we shall inform the Government about it tomorrow. However, no final agreement has yet been arrived at.”

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CHAPTER 17

THE DEADLOCK

The session on Wednesday15 June was satisfactory in all respects. At the Press briefing held in the auditorium of the PM House after it ended, I together with Prof. Ghafoor, gave a summary of the points on which the PNA and the government had agreed for resolving the crisis. In brief, I told them that the general elections would be held in October, and a committee comprising Hafeez Pirzada and Prof. Ghafoor had been constituted to work out the technical details. Further, a ten – member council, consisting of five representatives from either side, had been set up to supervise implementation of the agreement. Also, that in case of dispute, the final decision would be given by a panel of three judges of the Supreme Court. The other points agreed to were: Election to the provincial assemblies would be held after those to the national assembly; emergency would be lifted the day the agreement was signed; Special Tribunals would be quashed (this included the Hyderabad Tribunal) ; the army would be withdrawn from Balochistan; constitutional amendments in clash with fundamental rights would be released; newspapers would have full freedom; equal time would be provided to both the sides over radio and TV; the agreement would be signed by the 20th of June; Pirzada and Prof. Ghafoor, with the help of four legal experts from either side, would prepare a draft of the agreement and that the signatories to the agreement would be Mr. Bhutto and Maulana Mufti Mahmud. I also informed the pressmen that the first meeting of the sub – committee would be held at 11 a.m. on 16 June at Islamabad.

After I finished giving the details, a newsman came up with a question "Has something been decided about Azad Kashmir as well?" he asked.

"Yes," said Prof. Ghafoor.

"We'd soon be discussing that with Sardar Abdul Qayum," I clarified.

"Has the date of elections been agreed upon? Asked another journalist.

"When the agreement has been reached everything has been agreed upon" I replied with a smile.

"Are you satisfied with the agreement?" someone asked Prof. Ghafoor.

"Had we not been satisfied how would the agreement be concluded" said Prof. Gahfoor.

“Do you think we have forced the agreement upon them? I jokingly asked the person who had posed that question.

“You journalists are a limit,” added Prof. Ghafoor. “Today it was in some newspaper that we were walking out of the situation; this is ‘totally wrong.’

Confirming what Prof. Ghafoor had said, I added that such a situation had never arisen.

“Have you accepted all the proposals of the Government?” another journalist asked Prof. Ghafoor.

Not considering it proper to give further details, Prof. Ghafoor said, “Friend, don’t ask so many questions today.”

“It is not for ourselves but for the seven crore people that we are asking these question,” retorted the journalist, they want to know exactly what you people are up to”

Prof. Ghafoor stood his ground. “But we will not make any announcement until all the details have been worked out”, he said.

An earlier question was repeated in a different form “Will the elections be held at the end of the year?” asked a journalist. “Has the idea of an interim government been abandoned?”

“Yes,” I replied briefly. “Yes, its finished,” said Prof. Ghafoor, equally briefly.

A question already asked came up again from another journalist. “Has it been decided to hold elections?” he asked.

“Yes, it’s been decided”, replied Prof. Ghafoor wearily.

With that I sought leave of the pressmen.

We were fully satisfied with the day’s proceedings as all issues had been settled amicably. It was definitely something for us to rejoice about as the nation had been pulled out from the mire of a crisis and our humble efforts had borne fruit.

While we were happy and satisfied, Asghar Khan was making his own comments on the agreement in his typical style. In a press conference at the residence of a present member of the National Assembly Malik Mehbub Hussain, he expressed displeasure at the agreement. He said it was of no worth unless all

its details were made known to the people as there could be a possibility of difficulties arising in their final settlement.

It appeared as if he had already decided upon the impediments which would come up in the future.

As compared to this, the attitude of Pakistan's sincere friend, Saudi Arabian Ambassador Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb, is worthy of note. A person with whom we had no recial or parochial relationship except that he was a brother in faith and had heartfelt concern for Pakistan, reacted so very differently on hearing that an agreement had been reached. "I am so delighted that I don't have words to express my happiness," he said, "this was the most important and sacred mission of my entire diplomatic carreer. I thank the Almighty that both sides have accorded respect to the august personality of King Khalid and accepted his proposals."

That night, at a dinner hosted in his honour by Malik Mehbub Hussasin, Mufti Mahmud announced that the agreement would be signed with in the next two or three days.

All of us were affected by the tension, but Mr. Bhutto appeared to be totally shatterd after having seen the negotiations through to a successful conclusion. As such, he informed Mufti Mahmud the same evening that he would be going to Larkhana for three or four days to rest and recuperate. He said this in our presence. At this Mufti Mahmud expressed his sympathies and said that he must go and rest. Even otherwise, he added, the drafting of the agreement was bound to consume three or four days.

On Thursday, 16 June, the sub – committee comprising Pirzada and Prof. Ghafoor, together with four legal experts from either side, had a two – hour long meeting in the State Bank Building. During this, all the initial details about reducing the accord to writing were agreed upon. That day, Mufti Mahmud was in Bannu. Addressing a huge gathering there in Masjid Jafar Khan he appealed to the people not to indulge in irresponsible talk otherwise the country would be plunged into a grave crisis. However, the very same day, Sardar Sher Baz Mazari had something else to say. Addressing a large public meeting at Swabi, the NDP Chief said that there could be no agreement unless the 32 points are accepted.

I failed to understand the reason for his talking like that after the agreement had been finalised. All that I could think of was what Prof. Ghafoor used to tell us off and on. He often said that the stand of Tehrik – I – Istiqlal's Asghar Khan, NDP's Begum Nasim Wali Khan and, to some extent, JUP's Mulana Shah Ahmed Noorani, was that instead of having any agreement with the People's Party government, effort should be made to have Martial Law imposed in the country. Prof. Ghafoor even went to the extent of saying that Asghar Khan

was claiming that he would have Martial Law imposed in the country after which the army would order elections with in 90 days. As such he did not want any agreement with the Government.

Now when the agreement had been reached despite the stand of those people, I started to ponder about the situation in the light of what Prof. Ghafoor had said so often. It came to me that there definitely were some in the ranks of the PNA who had relations with the Generals, and it was they who gave air to the very same ideas in public meetings which the Generals would earlier place before Mr. Bhutto in the meetings. I had smelt the intentions of the Generals and even conveyed my doubts about them to the Prime Minister. Even the PNA's Secretary General had himself said that his leaders were trying to pave the way for Martial Law. On our own side, I was apprehensive about the attitude of Hafeez Pirzada who was a member of our negotiating team. To my thinking, had the Prime Minister chosen Rafi Raza to be with him on the team, he would have assisted him better on the legal issue. Moreover, he would have been more sober and serious, not being a playboy like Pirzada. In addition; he was also completely sincere to Mr. Bhutto. Unfortunately, for reasons unknown, Mr. Bhutto was averse to him those days, so much so that more than once he even dubbed him as a CIA agent, alleging that it was he who had leaked information about the atomic programme to America. To me such an insinuation against a true patriot and an honest and true friend like Rafi Raza was most uncalled for.

All that Mufti Mahmud and others knew was that Mr. Bhutto would be going to Larkhana for a few day's rest, when on Thursday, 16 June, came the sudden announcement that he was proceeding on a tour of five Muslim countries the next day to offer thanks to the Heads of those States. It was a multipurpose tour in several ways. Where he actually wanted to thank the Heads of those States for the interest they had taken for resolving the political crisis in Pakistan, he also wanted to impress upon the Americans that since he had won the war at the internal front he would now be kicking aside all the hurdles placed by it in the way of his atomic programme and was proceeding to collect the required funds. He wanted to make it known to US that he cared two hoots for the steps it was taking to thwart his programme.

Mr. Bhutto's third target was the Generals. He wanted them to realise that because of his personal connections at the international level, he enjoyed an eminent position which they had better keep in mind in case they nursed some wrong notions, otherwise, in the long run, it could create quite some problems for them.

Mr. Bhutto also had the PNA in mind. He wanted its leaders to understand that a person of his stature had given enough rope to small fry like them, and that they should not expect anything more from him.

The Prime Minister showered his kindness on this humble person as well. During the Press conference in which he made the announcement of his tour abroad, he made special mention of me. “Kausar Niazi has truly lived up as a spokesman,” he said, “I appreciate his capabilities.” He also had words of praise for Prof. Ghafoor.

It was the same day that Malik Ghulam Mustafa Khar took charge of his office as Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs. This caused considerable consternation to the PNA leaders.

Gen. Zia – ul – Haq also reached Karachi that day where he was received by Gen. Arbab Jahanzeb. The same evening he returned to Rawalpindi. During this trip he was accompanied by Maj. – Gen. S.M. Abbasi.

Leaving the Generals and PNA leaders to their fate, Prime Minister Bhutto left the next day (Friday, 17 June) on a five-day trip to Saudi Arabia, Libya, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and Iran.

Among the demands put forward by the PNA, one pertained to Azad Kashmir. They wanted fresh elections there as well. Mr. Bhutto, therefore, had asked me to contact Sardar Abdul Qayum in that connection and decide whatever I thought proper. As such, without wasting any time, I invited Sardar Abdul Qayum over to my residence. Consequently, on 17 June, he arrived, along with Sardar Sikander Hayat. It hardly took us an hour and a half to arrive at a settlement and elections in Azad Kashmir were agreed for October. Sardar Qayum also wanted some amendments in the Azad Kashmir Act but a decision on that could only be taken by the Prime Minister. As such I took the draft of the desired amendments for consideration of Mr. Bhutto on his return. Because of that, another meeting was agreed upon.

On the other hand, a fresh issue cropped up in the Pirzada – Prof. Ghafoor sub – committee meeting. Refusing to take any positive step, Hafeez made it clear to Prof. Ghafoor that he would not accept the new demand. This “new demand” was only that the PNA wanted a constitutional safeguard for the accord for which an interim clause had to be added in the Constitution.

It so happened that when the negotiating team placed the accord before the PNA high command and its legal advisers, the main objection raised was that it did not have any constitutional status and hence nothing could be done if Mr. Bhutto backed out at some stage. Further, if someone challenged the constitutional status of the accord in the Supreme Court, where could it stand? It was, therefore, decided by them that the Government be asked to provide constitutional cover to the accord.

Taking a rigid stand, Hafeez Pirzada openly told Prof. Ghafoor that it was beyond his scope to accept that demand. This deadlock, create at the last

moment, especially when Mr. Bhutto was out of the country, ruined all the efforts we had put in. it was not all that serious if the PNA's legal advisers wanted a constitutional safeguard. When the accord had been reached with all noble intentions, there was no harm to give it a cover under the Constitution. Pirzada's refusal caused the PNA to lose faith in Mr. Bhutto, with the result that the same day (Friday, 17 June) Prof. Ghafoor made the announcement that the issue would be taken up in the high level meeting. He was also critical of Mr. Bhuttto's visit abroad. He, as also the other PNA leaders, felt that Mr. Bhutto was not honest about the accord and had therefore left instructions with Hafeez Pirzada to sabotage it.

On Saturday, 18 June, Mr. Bhutto called on King Khalid at Riyadh and left the same day for Tripoli. Here at home, Sardar Abdul Qayum and myself had a meeting and we discussed the Azad Kashmir Act. The Chief Secretary and Law Secretary of Azad Kashmir were also present during the hour-long session. It was decided to allow time to the concerned officers for giving a legal shape to the demands and putting up the draft in the next meeting on Tuesday. On its part, the People's Party of Azad Kashmir was insistent that its opinion should also be considered during these parleys, otherwise their position would be jeopardised in the territory. I, therefore, met Pir Ali Jan Shah in the evening and assured him that he had no cause to feel perturbed. The people would not ignore him if he had been of any service to them. as such I advised that he should start preparing for fresh elections.

The same day Hafeez Pirzada went on to add fuel to the fire. Addressing a party convention at Lahore, he further antagonised the PNA. He said, "We have rejected the demand for appointing Governors with their consent." There was hardly any need to disclose what had been accepted and which demand had been rejected. It was inexplicable why Hafeez was indulging in such talk. Even Sardar Qayum expressed his concern at this. His reaction was that if Mr. Pirzada could announce the rejection of a few demands then they were also at liberty to tell the people that Mr. Bhutto, who was not prepared to hear a word about the dissolution of the Assemblies, had been rendered helpless.

The party convention mentioned above ended in a fiasco, and a student leader, Zulfikar Zulfi, was badly beaten up.

Mr. Bhutto reached Tripoli on Sunday, 19 June, and met President Gaddafi, Later the same day, he arrived in Abu Dhabi.

Prof. Ghafoor went to Peshawar where he gave a statement that the Government's attitude had vitiated the atmosphere and that disagreements with regard to the accord would not be tolerated for an indefinite period. On his part, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan said in a Press conference at Lahore that appointment of Governors with their consent had been agreed upon and that unnecessary doubts were being created about the accord. Asghar Khan also

came up with a statement. He said that no agreement was possible with the Government unless demands of the people were accepted. Even otherwise, he added, the Government was employing delaying tactics. Sardar Qayum openly crticised Hafeez Pirzada and alleged that he wanted to sabotage the accord at the behest of some “secret wire – pulling.” All the same,” he added, “we shall not allow the people’s movement to be sabotaged.”

The Prizada – Prof. Ghafoor sub – committee met again on 20 June at 6 p.m. in the light of the statement made during the intervening period, the readers can gauge for themselves the atmosphere which must have prevailed during this session. Prof. Ghafoor was justifiably sore that because of Pirzada’s attitude and statements the prestige of the PNA negotiating team had been lowered in the eyes of its high command. In response, Pirzada adopted an even more aggressive posture. In disgust, Prof. Ghafoor walked out of the meeting saying, “No further talk is possible with you. We’ll only talk to Mr. Bhutto when he returns.”

Sardar Qayum and myself had reached an understanding about Azad Kashmir, but that also became a victim of Pirzada’s harsh attitude. Consequently, Sardar Abdul Qayum announced at a Press conference that Pirzada was purposely sabotaging the negotiations, and if there was no agreement between the PNA and the Government then they too would not accept any agreement with regard to Azad Kashmir. The same day, addressing a reception arrange by students in Rawalpindi, he made a sensational statement. He said the Government had hatched a plan to have some PNA leaders assassinated, and that they included Asghar Khan, Shah Ahmed Noorani and Sher Baz Khan Mazari. Speaking at Islamabad, Mufti Mahmud said that Bhutto should not have gone abroad without consulting the PNA. Even otherwise, he contended, the PM had only mentioned to him about going to Larkhana. He also said that no further dialogue was possible with Pirzada. He appealed to the people to observe a day of protest on Friday if the accord was not signed by that day.

Flying from the United Arab Emirates, Bhutto reached Kuwait the same day. Before leaving, he gave a lengthy interview to Abu Dhabi TV in which he said that an agreement had been reached between the Government and the PNA top hold elections in October. He also said that Pakistan would procure an atomic reprocessing plant at any cost, and suggested the holding of the third Islamic Summit Conference. He termed his talks with Sheikh Zaid bin Sultan as most useful.

The same day Azad Kashmir President Sardar Ibrahim, Speaker Mansha Khan, Peoples Party President Pir Ali Jan Shah and Mumtaz Rathore called on me in the form of a delegation. They complained that after an agreement with Sardar Qayum they would stand nowhere? Putting them at ease, I told them that their views would be given due weight while finalising the agreement. Chaudhry Nur Hussain and Abdul Hamid Khan also met me individually. They also

contended that the agreement should not be based only on the suggestions and demands put forward by Sardar Qayum.

I was terribly grieved at the situation create by Hafeez Pirzadaa; he had raised a new wave of bitterness in the country. Consequently, I made an appeal through the Press to leaders of the Alliance requesting them to desist from making regrettable statements about the accord. I said reaching an agreement was not the defeat or victory of any one party but was, in fact, the victory of democracy. I assured the opposition that there was no question of backing out from the accord, and if sabotaged it would be disastrous for the country and the nation. (This statement of mine is on record.)

In the evening, Sardar Qayum and myself had our last round of talks, during which it was agreed that elections in Azad Kashmir would be held on 10 October. However, the PNA's demand, presented in a refined form by him, was that the constitutional status of the ten – members implementation council be determined, because neither the main accord directly concerned Azad Kashmir nor was its acceptance with in my powers. As such I requested him to leave the matter for Mr. Bhutto to decide. As it is, the PNA had stopped talking to Hafeez Pirzada who otherwise was the one to take a decision on such constitutional issues.

That was the end of my talks with Sardar Qayum.

On Tuesday, 21 June, Mr. Bhutto met the Shah of Iran in Tehran and also addressed a Press conference. After that he left for Kabul. Earlier, after meeting the Emir, he had also met Yasser Arafat in Kuwait and made some bitter remarks about America and Israel.

The same morning Prof. Ghafoor met the Ambassador of Kuwait in Islamabad. Informing him about the latest position, he also told him the reason for the stalemate. The Ambassador re – assured him saying it was a minor issue which would easily be settled on the return of Mr. Bhutto.

On Thursday, 23 June, Prime Minister Bhutto returned from his six – days tour. Landing at Islamabad from Kabul, he straightaway asked Hafeez Pirzada at the airport how all that confusion had been created during his absence. Hafeez was about to explain when the newsmen, including a fair number of foreign correspondents, stormed Mr. Bhutto. The very first question that they shot at him pertained to the accord, to which Mr. Bhutto replied, almost helplessly, "Now what can I tell you? When I left, the accord had been reached. I don't know what happened in my absence. I can only say something after assessing the situation."

Immediately after his return, negotiations started in PM House between us and PNA's negotiating team comprised of Mufti Mahmud, Nawabzada Nasurllah

Khan and Prof. Ghafoor. The session lasted for almost two hours. During this, the PNA team confronted us with quite a different draft. It pertained to the composition of the Implementation Council, its powers, its constitutional status and the date on which the assemblies would be dissolved. One look at the draft, replete held his jargon and hair splitting and Mr. Bhutto held his head in despair. He asked Mufti Mahmud to allow him a day for the reply.

At the end of the session I told the waiting journalists that the agreement would be finalised very soon and even reduced to writing. I added that there was no possibility of our not reaching an agreement.

The fresh draft of the PNA contained all the points which, probably, the speeches and statements of Hafeez Pirzada had put in their head. For example, one of the demands put forward was that the Governments in all four provinces should immediately be dismissed, and Governor's rules imposed. Further, that the Governors be appointed with the concurrence of the PNA.

On Friday, 21 June, Sheikh Riaz Al Khateeb met Mufti Mahmud, Nawabzada Nasurllah and Prof. Ghafoor and discussed the situation arising out of the deadlock. During the two – hour meeting, he assured them that Mr. Bhutto was serious about the accord. He had been to Saudi Arabia when Mr. Bhutto visited the country and came back the very next day. Ever since his return he had been contacting various leaders.

The next round of negotiations was due to be held on 25 June.

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CHAPTER 18

DECISIVE JUNCTURE – SENSATIONAL MOMENTS

On the morning of 25 June, the Prime Minister called a meeting of the Chief of the Army Staff and all the Crops Commanders. Hafeez Pirzada, Gen. Tikka Khan and myself also attended.

Placing the fresh draft of the PNA before the Generals he asked for their comments.

"This is just like Gen. Arora placing the surrender papers before Gen. Niazi and asking him to sign them," said one of them.

Pondering over the draft clause by clause, another General spoke up. "This is for the formation of a super – Government," he commented.

"We have serious objection to some clause," pontification another General."

"You can see for yourself," said the Prime Minister, "we'll have to quash the Hyderabad Tribunal and also with drawn the army from Balochistan."

At this Gen. Zia – ul – Haq spoke up, rather excitedly. "This cannot happen. Sir," he said, "give me a chance so that they listen to me on the issue."

All right, we'll send for you," conceded Mr. Bhutto "You give them the army point of view and explain the difficulties involved which would affect defence and national security."

The Prime Minister appeared quite happy at Gen. Zia – ul – Haq's offer.

It was during this meeting that Gen. Tikka Khan came up with that idiotic suggestion so often referred to by Gen. Zia – ul – Haq. He said, "Sir, I say we should just knock out five to six thousand of their men … that will cool them off."

According to Gen. Zia – ul – Haq it was then that the idea of finishing off the Bhutto Government clicked in his mind as he felt that it was bent upon bloodshed. The fact, however, is that no Government functionary attending the meeting, including Mr. Bhutto had endorsed what Tikka Khan said.

In conclusion, Mr. Bhutto informed the Generals that the Government had also prepared a draft of the accord which would be presented to the PNA in the session that evening. He said the endeavour would be to find a happy mean between the two accords and arrive at a joint agreement.

The meeting dispersed after that.

During the eleventh session which lasted for over two hours, Mr. Bhutto presented the second amended draft agreement. Both the drafts were discussed in detail, clause by clause, separating the disputed once from those on which there was concensus. Most of the time was consumed in discussing the authority and powers of the Implementation Council. Mr. Bhutto also told Mufti Mahmud that since the army had certain objections to some of the clauses in their draft, the Chief of the Army Staff wished to explain the army point of view to them.

Sunday, 26 June was important in the respect that it was on that day that Mufti Mahmud warned the Government in a formal conference that elections would be boycotted unless constitutional safeguards were provided. In order to explain the PNA stand, he added, they would be sending emissaries to friendly Arab countries.

Prof. Ghafoor came out more harshly. “The final draft of the accord will be presented to the Government today,” he declared. “whether they accept it or not. We cannot wait any longer. Our stand will not change with regard to the Implementation Council. Now if the negotiations break down, we are prepared to go to jail once again. The draft we present today will be the final ultimatum to the Government. Within two or three days we’ll release all the documents to the Press for publication and the central leaders will return to their homes.”

In a public meeting outside Masjid – I – Shuhada in Lahore, Begum Nasim Wali Khan and Sardar Sher Baz Mazari also made highly emotional attacks on the designs of the Government. As a result there was an armed clash in Sant Naga between the workers of the Peoples Party and the Alliance in which eight persons were injured. The situation appeared to be reverting to where it stood on 16 March 1977 when the PNA started the agitation.

In a meeting with Prof. Ghafoor on Monday, 27 June, Hafeez Pirzada refused to accept the final draft of the PNA, saying he would do no such thing under threat. He insisted that the Alliance withdraw its ultimatum otherwise there could be no further negotiations. To this, Mufti Mahmud reacted in the following words: "Pirzada’s statement amounts to an announcement that the negotiations have broken down.”

Asghar Khan also severely criticised the statement of Pirzada and termed it as deplorable.

The atmosphere had become extremely tense.

On Tuesday, 28 June, addressing a hurriedly called Press conference in the Assembly Chamber, the Prime Minister explained his stand. “I will not accept a supergovernment,” he said (This was the same term as used by a General during the meeting on 25 June.)

Continuing, he said, “PNA wants powers for the Implementation Council more than what the Government wields. If there is to be an accord it has to be according to the Constitution, otherwise not. If the stalemate continues, things will go beyond the control of all politicians I will not accept the demand for including PNA in the Government. I don’t care for power. I am ever ready to go to Larkhana; I don’t care whether angels tread here after that or some Rasputin takes over! And the capitalists ..… I’ll skin them so badly that their generations will remember it."

I remember Sheikh Riaz Al Khateeb called on him after the Press conference and advised him not to get too emotional.

The same day Asghar Khan responded to all that Mr. Bhutto had said. Addressing a large public meeting in Taxila he observed. “Now our demand is the Prime Minister’s resignation.”

So far as the People’s Party was concerned it had fallen to such depths that in the convention called by the Prime Minister in Multan the workers hurled chairs and stabbed each other. The Deputy Secretary and Secretary General of the Party, Nasir Ali Rizvi and Dr. Ghulam Hussain could do nought but sit there as mute spectators. Neither the leaders nor the workers of the Party realised that they were perched at the edge of a precipice, and would be thrown in by the onrushing waves. That was no time to blame or doubt each other.

The efforts of Sheikh Riaz Al – Khateeb that day bore fruit to the extent that Mr. Bhutto rang up Mufti Mahmud and asked him over the next day, Wednesday, 29 June. He also assured him that no leader of the Alliance would be arrested and that the accord would, God willing, be finalised the next day.

Mr. Arshad Chaudhry’s residence was the assembling point of the PNA leaders. According to CID reports, they had decided to disperse and return to their homes. However, due to the intervention of Mr. Riaz Al – Khateeb, the departure was held in abeyance. Consequently, on 29 June Mr. Bhutto had an hour long talk with Mufti Mahmud at the PM House without the help of aides from either side. During this meeting it was decided that the Pirzada – Prof. Ghafoor sub – committee would consider the draft of the accord and present its suggestions at a high level session of the two teams.

Deliberations of the sub – committee went on till Thursday 30 June, but Pirzada and Prof. Ghafoor failed to reach a concensus. As such both of them drafted their separate notice of objections and suggestions for presentation at the high level meeting the next day, the 1st of July. Earlier, Mr. Bhutto had convinced Mufti Mahmud to hear the army's view point during the next day's session so that he could decide for himself which of the demands were in the interest of the country and the nation and which were not.

On first July, negotiations commenced in the Cabinet Room of PM House at 10 – 30 a.m. To present the army's point of view, the Heads of the Services started arriving around ten past eleven. During this period Mr. Bhutto kept going through the draft presented by the PNA and telling Mufti Mahmud and his aides that the army had objections to some of the clauses. "We shall have to adopt a conciliatory attitude," he warned.

Around a quarter past twelve, Gen. Sharif, Gen. Zia – ul – Haq, Admiral Sharif and Air Chief Marshal; Zulfikar Ali Khan entered the meeting room. Gen. Zia – ul – Haq had a young man with him carrying some maps under his arm. Very carefully, He hung those along the wall, one by one.

That young man was Khalid Mahmud Arif ---- sedate sober, and quite. He did not speak a word during the entire session, and just sat quietly observing the faces of those around him. It was the first time that we had seen him with Gen. Zia – ul – Haq. To me he appeared to be more of an intellectual and philosopher than an army Brigadier. It was much later that I discovered that he was also a poet, and a good one at that.

Picking up his cane, Gen. Zia – ul – Haq started pinpointing various locations on the maps and giving details of alien troops stationed across our borders.

Explaining the situation as it stood militarily, Gen. Zia – ul – Haq suddenly started delivering a lecture on the current political crisis and the dangers involved in it for the country. He started stressing upon the need of a political settlement.

At this Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan felt rather offended. "We don't have to hear a political sermon from you," he said curtly, "We know politics very well. If you have finished with explaining the military points of view then its enough."

Gen. Zia – ul – Haq was taken aback by this show of annoyance. The atmosphere in the room was becoming tense when Mr. Bhutto, using his diplomatic finesse, cooled things down.

The Generals left a while and the session was adjourned to meet again at eight that night.

The same afternoon I had to address a rally of the minorities at Rawalpindi. I had already received information about clashes at several places in Lahore between workers of the People's Party and the Alliance and that PPP flags had also burnt. The same day, PPP took that the agitation would now be launched with greater vigor.

Addressing the minorities rally in Rawalpindi Press Club, I was terribly grieved at the gave situation which had arisen in the country without the people realizing its implication. I ended my speech with three verses of Qateel Shifai's. These reflected a true picture of the situation prevailing at the time:

We are both equally involved in this house.

Do not set in afire, for it is both yours and mine.

Among those slaughtered yesterday on the crucifix of politics.

One happened to be your dear one, the other mine.

Why should we quarrel among ourselves at every milestone?

This will only hamper your journey onward, as well as mine.

The second and decisive session of the negotiations started on 1st July, at 8 p.m. Both Prof. Ghafoor and Pirzada put forward their respective objections and contentions on various clauses of the accord. During this the Prime Minister kept taking notes and discussing the relevant issues with Mufti Mahmud. On some points Mufti Mahmud and his companies agreed, on others Mr. Bhutto had to surrender. The session kept stretching on. The points on which there were noted down separately and discussion continued on the disputed ones until a consensus was reached. Finally, after thirteen and a half hours of negotiations, the session ended at 6 – 30 in the morning. When the sun of 2 July made its appearance, all the issues had been resolved and amendments made in the final draft to the Central Council of PNA that day (2 July) and if it gave its consent, the accord would be signed.

There was a day – long session of the PNA high command at the residence of Col. (Retd.) Tasaddaq Hussain, the Tehrik – I – Istiqlal leader. During the hearted discussion on the draft. Asghar Khan took to task both Mufti Mahmud and Prof. Ghafoor. Completely exhausted. They asked him as to what, after all, did he want and what could they have done. "You should have walked out of the meeting," Asghar Khan thundered, "which idiot advised you to keep awake the whole night and keep negotiating? This is an old and special trick of Bhutto. He shatters people through sleepness. This accord is nothing but a jugglery of words, something beyond you people's comprehension. I consider

this accord as of no worth. Remember, if you sign it. I'll launch as agitation against you and tell the people that you have betrayed the blood of the martyrs."

The anger of Begum Nasim Wali Khan and Sardar Sher Baz Mazari gave an added boost to the bitter words of Asghar Khan. However, Maulana Noorani cooled him down with a few sane words, and enquired of him as to what should be the next step. At this Asghar Khan again flared up. "If you people just step aside," he said, "I'll handle everything. I am even prepared to give an assurance on behalf of the army that after imposition of Martial Law they would hold elections with in 90 days."

Hearing that, a hush descended upon everyone. After quite a few minutes silence, Mufti Mahmud spoke up. "Do you know what you are saying? "He asked. "If the army steps in, it would no doubts put an end to Bhutto but then we also won't be getting anything."

Asghar Khan's response was only a contemptuous 'pooh'. With that he left the room.

To bring the situation back to normal and save the PNA from a split, Pir Pagara handed over the draft to the legal advisers asking them to jot down their objections to it so that the negotiating team could take it the next day (3 July) for presentation to Bhutto. "If he accepts, "he said "the accord will be signed, otherwise not."

On the morning of 3 July Sardar Qayum came over to my place. Hardly setting down, he said, "Some of our leaders are in contact with the army and I fear it may take over. Please tell Mr. Bhutto not to delay signing the accord. Rather, it would be better if you arrange a meeting with him for Mufti Mahmud and myself."

I was getting late for a Cabinet meeting but in view of the sensational disclosure made by Sardar Qayum I rushed to my bedroom, contacted the Prime Minister over the green telephone, and told him what Sardar Sahib had said.

The Prime Minister was probably at breakfast. After listening to all I had to say, he spoke up. "Friend," he said, "forget about them; these people only look for an excuse to have an interview with me."

God in heaven; I was stunned at hearing this. Even at that crucial hour how conscious he was that meeting him was something of an honour for others! Anyway, I told him that I'd be slightly late for the Cabinet meeting as Sardar Sahib happened to be at my place. "No problem," he said, "come when you have finished with him."

Excusing myself, I told Sardar Abdul Qayum that I had to attend an important meeting and could only tell him on return when the Prime Minister would be able to meet him.

Lost in horrible thoughts, I reached the PM House for the meeting. It had started about 45 minutes earlier. Just as I opened the door of the Cabinet Room to enter, my eyes fell upon Gen. Zia – ul – Haq. seated opposite the Prime Minister. Seeing me, Mr. Bhutto smiled. “Look,” he said, “here he comes. Now he’ll himself tell you about the talk he had with Sardar Sahib.”

It was probably the same topic under discussion at the time. I briefly informed the Cabinet about my talk with Sardar Abdul Qayum. Probably, Gen. Zia – ul – Haq had already dismissed the fears expressed by Sardar Abdul Qayum. The Prime Minister asked other members of the Cabinet to express their opinion on the matter. First to speak, Hafeez Pirzada called it a new mischief of the PNA. And then, I listened to most of the other ministers voicing their agreement which him, each one vying with the other in eulogising the Prime Minister.

The Chief Minister of Sindh, Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, also happened to be present at the Cabinet meeting by special invitation. His silence indicated that, like myself, he was also giving due credence to what Sardar Abdul Qayum had said.

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CHAPTER 19

FILLING THE GAPS

This story of the negotiations is about to end after a few turns, but I have a feeling that certain happenings have remained untold. It would, therefore, be better to place those on record as well before getting to the conclusion. Moreover, a few questions which are on the lips of every one also need to be answered do that this historical document is not left wanting in any way.

I have already said that the PNA's negotiating team copmprised the late Maulana Mufti Mahmud, Nawabzada Nasurllah Khan and Prof. Ghafoor. However, an impression prevails that these names were suggested by Mr. Bhutto himself. This is wrong. The team was selected by none other than Mufti Mahmud, in consultation with Asghar Khan in the team but Mr. Bhutto put his foot down.

Every session of negotiations was held in the Cabinet Room, adjacent to the Prime Minister's Office. It was the same room in which the Cabinet had its meetings.

During the session with the PNA, the two teams sat opposite each other across the table, the PNA to the right, we to the left. With Mufti Mahmud in the middle, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan sat to his right and the Professor on his left. On the other side, Pirzada sat on the right of Mr. Bhutto and myself on his left. Usually we first assembled at the Prime Minister's place, exchanged views about the forthcoming session over a cup of tea and then moved together to the venue. Before commencement of the session, Pirzada and I used to tell Mr. Bhutto all that we wanted to say, leaving it to him to put it across. During the actual session, we hardly ever spoke; all the talking was done by Mr. Bhutto on our behalf. After the session, we again sat among ourselves reviewing what had transpired. Mr. Bhutto was a strict believer in discipline and decorum. He couldn't tolerate any difference of opinion coming up from our side in the presence of the PNA's team. He, therefore, made doubly sure that such an occasion never arose.

Obviously, the PNA's team must also be having mutual consultations before coming for the session. However, they were relatively more free to express their opinion. Mufti Mahmud was basically a scholar and (religious) teacher, but unlike the bigoted religious leaders he had no narrow mindedness or obstinacy about him. An open – minded person, he would accept anything reasonable.

I had an old association with Mufti Sahib. In 1960 when an Islamic Front comprising eleven religious parties was formed, Mufti Mahmud was its President

and I was the Secretary General. We had traveled together many time and attended common public meetings. I was fully aware of hi pleasant habits and wide vision, but it was Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan whom I was seeing front close quarters for the first time. Now that I had an occasion of meeting him, I was greatly impressed by his capability. It repeatedly reminded me of Mir Taqi Mir's verse:

Rarely born are people of his nature,

Alas! You've not been in the company of Mir.

Prof. Ghafoor was an old colleague of the Jamat – I – Islami days but at that time he had not attained eminence. Extremely hardworking and meticulous, his temperament does not show that he is a member of the Jamaat. Despite disagreements, he knows how to respect and be respected. He was the one who always carried the bulky documents and did most of the writing work for his team.

In our team, Mr. Bhutto's expertise in negotiations was widely known. He had won several international battles in that field. Even in the most difficult and highly emotional situations, he never allowed the atmosphere to become bitter or heavy. At time he'd even make a light humorous remark. Like an experienced trader, he was adept at bargaining.

My friend Hafeez Pirzada was extremely intelligent and could work hard when he wanted to. However, by temperament, and nature, he was not a realist – at times he became emotional, at others over – optimistic.

So far as I am concerned, I usually confined myself to taking notes during the sessions. Whatever I wanted to say was always conveyed to Mr. Bhutto before or after the meetings.

A particular incident during the sessions will always stick in my mind.

Mufti Mahmud did not chew betel regularly. All the same, whenever in a light mood, he would chew one happily. Unlike Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani who always carries a small betel case, Mufti Mahmud used to bring some with him prepared at a wayside shop. These he would chew during the session. Now, not being adept at that, he needed to spit as well. However, there was no question of a spittoon being anywhere in the Cabinet Room. As such, he would keep spitting into the ashtray lying on the table. At times those beautiful marble ashtrays would be full to the brim with his crimson spit. After the session, whenever in a good mood, Mr. Bhutto would say. "This is the alternate Prime Minister of the future, one who does not know what is etiquette."

Twice, when the session was prolonged, we had dinner together. Despite being a diabetic, Mufti Mahmud was very fond of desserts. As such Mr. Bhutto

specially had sweet dishes prepared for him. There was quite some lively conversation during the dinner and many lighthearted remarks were exchanged. "Prof. Ghafoor and you shouldn't tell the newsmen during the briefing that we dined with the Prime Minister," said Mufti Mahmud addressing me. "People will otherwise say that their leaders are enjoying feast while they are dying."

During the initial few sessions, the PNA leaders were very insistent on the release of detainees, Mufti Mahmud making a special mention of some belonging to his own constituency. Dera Ismail Khan. As of all other meetings, my personal diary has a detailed record of one such session.

Mufti Sahib: In D.I. khan, Sheikh Aziz – ur – Rehman Gulsher, Mohammad Azeem and Maulana Abdus Salam have yet not released.

Bhutto: Please come to the basic issue Mufti Sahib, otherwise there'll be unnecessary delay.

Mufti Sahib: Then the main points happen to be re – election, their arrangements and related matters.

Bhutto: Can't there be any settlement about the seats?

Mufti Sahib: We launched the agitation for restoration of the people's right not for seats.

Bhutto: So the matter ends, Pir Sahib had said, "Can't rule out re – polling." Prof. Ghafoor also said the same.

Prof. Ghafoor: Yes; and others were also in agreement.

Nawabzada: Re – polling?

Bhutto Just as if the 7^{th} is coming up again; all seats will be contested.

Prof. Ghafoor: That would be all right.

Bhutto: Then I'll withdraw the symbol of 'Plough'

Mufti Sahib: That would come later.

Nawabzada: Would there be no campaign?

Bhutto: Yes.

Nawabzada: What would happen in Balochistan where we didn't contest?

Bhutto: The army has some views about that. They say they cannot move out of there immediately, it'll take them six months.

Prof. Ghafoor: It will be enough if they stop the operation.

Bhutto: They say the other side was the one to start.

Prof. Ghafoor: Your statement would suffice – that the situation is now normal and army control has been withdrawn.

Bhutto: But they content that it'll take six months for the situation to become normal. Anyway, we would be needing a cooling off period. We could have extended the tenure of our Government for one year, up to August 1978.

Pirzada: Up to October, 1978.

Prof. Ghafoor: The Election Commission must be granted full powers.

Bhutto: That's no problem.

In the very first session, Mr. Bhutto offered those seats to the PNA which they considered to have been rigged. He said he would ask the concerred elected members to resign and then not put up his own candidates in the bye – elections. The PNA did not accept this.

At the suggestion of Mr. Bhutto, the question of forming a coalition Government also came up. He said he was prepared to accept four ministers from the PNA but would allocate them portfolios of his own choice. The PNA wanted it to be on a 50 – 50 basis but Mr. Bhutto would not go beyond four. In the next day's session, I increased the offer to five ministerships. Expecting the PNA to accept. I thought we would be able to reach a settlement at the very initial stage. Even otherwise, I knew that once the PNA ministers joined the Cabinet they would start siding with Mr. Bhutto, and the Alliance would be that those demanding the resignation of the Prime Minister had now accepted him as such and joined his Government.

My offer of five ministries annoyed Mr. Bhutto. However, when a member of his team had made it, he could not retreat. Regrettably, the PNA remained adamant about their earlier stand, and even the offer of five ministries could not satisfy them.

Another question that is constantly in the public mind is whether Mr. Bhutto was on the verge of removing Gen. Zia – ul – Haq at that time. In this connection they want to know if it is correct that he talked about it to the Defence Secretary General, Ghulam Ishaq Khan (present Chairman of the Senate) who conveyed it to Gen. Zia – ul – Haq. They think that is how he was alerted to

preempt the move and attack first. Further, it was as a reward for that service that Ghulam Ishaq Khan was given such importance and was made Senior Minister in the Martial Law days and still continues to be the alter ego of Gen. Zia – ul – Haq.

So far as the removal of Gen. Zia – ul – Haq is concerned, Mr. Bhutto had definitely it. He had even given a hint of that to Gen. Abdullah Malik and, according to some indications, it was him that he wanted to replace Gen. Zia. He was only looking for a proper occasion to do that. He would have done it after a political settlement had been reached, law and order restored, and his grip on power strengthened. However, the stage had not yet arrived where he could make a mention of his intention. He had the unusual ability of keeping his designs hidden and confining his secrets to himself. Moreover, if he had to make a mention of his decision, it could be to Tikka Khan but in no way would he let out such a secret to Ghulam Ishaq Khan who was never in his good books.

I remember the meeting which was called to take stock of the army action against the people of Dir. Those attending included the provincial Governors besides members of the Cabinet. Gen. Fazl – I – Haq, even then a bold personality, was the Crops Commander. He gave the briefing. After that everyone offered their views. When it came to Ghulam Ishaq Khan's turn, he disagreed with the action taken by the army. He contented that the situation had been create due to mishandling by civil administration. People in Dir, he said, survive on what they earn from the forests. When that source of live hood was banned, they wanted to register their protest by way of a long march. "These are the same people" he added, "who offered sacrifices in Kashmir. How can they become so averse to Pakistan that they would rebel against it?"

Mr. Bhutto did not like such open dissent, coming as it did from a Secretary the Government. "Those who do not agree with the policy of the Government," he said, "Should not remain in the Government."

The next day when the rumour went round that Ghulam Ishaq Khan was resigning, Mr. Bhutto sent for him. "I have all regard for you," he said, "but I cannot accept your saying in the presence of the Generals that the Government and the army are at fault. Don't resign. There's a parade tomorrow; you accompany me to Kakul in the helicopter so that yesterday's impression is washed out."

A similar incident took place after the elections of 1977. Mr. Bhutto had a joint statement issued by the heads of the armed forces expressing their allegiance to the Government and saying that the elections had been fair. After issuing this statement, when Gen. Zia – ul – Haq met Ghulam Ishaq Khan in connection with some work, the latter said, "Who asked you to issue that statement?" "Where's the harm?" asked Gen. Zia. "Admitted that you are with

the Government," said Ghulam Ishaq Khan, "but how could you say that the elections were fair? On what basis did you issue that certificate?"

Now I can't say whether Ghulam Ishaq Khan's room was bugged, but somehow what he said to Gen. Zia reached Mr. Bhutto. He was greatly annoyed by this plain speaking.

This being the nature of their relationship, how could Mr. Bhutto take him in to confidence and let out the secret that he was going to remove Gen. Zia!

Another question asked is why did Mr. Bhutto proceed abroad without signing the accord which had been finalised. In this regard, I have shed quite some light in the previous chapters, but would like to add just one more point.

While proceeding on that tour what Mr. Bhutto told us was that since fresh elections were inevitable, and even the date had been settled with the PNA, he was going for the purpose of securing funds for the People's Party from those Heads of States abroad who also happened to be his personal friends. Within the country, he said, the capitalists and industrialists would hardly give any thing.

Some people have also been saying that Mr. Bhutto had gone to tell Col. Gaddafi that he was prepared to hand over the port of Gawader to Russia. However, no such thing is within my knowledge. Agha Shahi is a respectable name among those who accompanied him on that tour. When I enquired from him about this, he expressed ignorance about any such move. But it is also true that during Mr. Bhutto's talk with Col. Gaddafi, no member of his delegation was present. They met in private.

In this book I have referred to the letter which Air Marshal (Retd.) Asghar Khan had addressed to officers of Pakistan's defence forces. I give below its full text: -

Air Marshal (Rtd.) M. Asghar Khan's

MESSAGE

TO THE OFFICERS OF DEFENCE SERVICES OF PAKISTAN

I am addressing this message to the Chief of Staff and the Officers Defence Services of Pakistan.

It is your duty to defend the territorial integrity of Pakistan and to obey all lawful commands of superior officers placed over you. To differentiate between a 'lawful' and an 'unlawful' command is the duty of every officer. Every one of you must ask your self whether what the army is doing today is 'lawful' activity and if your conscience tells you that it is not and you still carry it out, you would appear to lack moral fibre and would be guilty of a grave crime against your country and your people.

You should by now have realised that military action to East Pakistan was a conspiracy in which the present Prime Minister played a Machiavellian role. You know the circumstance in which military action in Balochistan was engineered and how completely unnecessary this action has been. You are also probably aware of the utterly unnecessary military action taken last year in DIR in the North West Frontier Province. If you have any interest in national affairs you must also be aware that during the election campaign the nation expressed its powerful disapproval of the present regime. Following the People's reaction of the Government, you should have been surprised at the election result in which the 'Pakistan National Alliance'

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CHAPTER 20

BUTTO – MAUDOODI MEETING

Mr. Bhutto was always at daggers drawn with Maulana Maudoodi, right from the day he launched his party as a people movement through to the period of the election campaign. There was no dearth of religious leaders who declared his slogan of Islamic socialism to be heresy, the late Maulana Ehtisham – ul – Haq Thanvi being the head of them all. It was he who initiated a signature campaign of religious figures to that effects. All the same, it was the Jamaat which Mr. Bhutto considered to be his main rival. As such it was the Jamaat which he made a target of attack during the elections so as to diminish its influence. Initially, when he thought of banning it altogether, he had, perforce, to seek my opinion. I objected to such an action. I explained that the Jamaat happened to be ideological organisation and an ideology is not something which can be obliterated by force. Moreover, the Jamaat enjoyed such standing that it could continue with its programme under a different name. Consequently, banning the party could only cause ignominy at the international level and serve no other useful purpose. My words clicked, and he stopped thinking on those lines thereafter.

Mr. Bhutto now wanted to attract the Jamaat and make it covertly cooperate with his party by showing it the red rag of communism and socialism, or at least convince it there by to stop opposing it. With this purpose in view, besides taking some other steps, he took recourse to the services of a decent, cool headed, bureaucrat, named Afzal Saeed Khan. He was closely related to the late Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi and was in a position to contact him at all times because of the family relationship.

It is beyond the scope of this narrative to say on which occasions, and how, Mr. Bhutto had earlier contacted Maulana Maudoodi, and what was the outcome of those meetings, yet it would remain incomplete if a mention is not made of the meeting he had with him after the elections when the agitation was in full swing. I have confirmed the details of this meeting with Maulana's perspicacious son, Syed Muhammad Farooq Maudoodi, who was a witness to it.

During the agitation, Afzal Saeed Khan and tired to convince him to have a meeting with Mr. Bhutto. However, the situation then was so tense and the possibilities of arousing suspicion so great, that Maulana would not agree. Later, using his old connections, Rao Rashid got the then Amir of Punjab's Jamaat – I – Islami, Pir Muhammad Ashraf, to effect a liaison. Pir Sahib is a sociable person and in those days he was quite close to the mind of Maulana Maudoodi. One fine

day he approached Maulana, together with Rao Sahib, and made him yield to the request. The meeting was set for 14 May at 9 p.m.

The 14th of May was a day of disturbances. With constant gunfire coming from Yellow Building, the crowed set it on fire. Flames leapt to the sky. Simultaneously, a bold leader of PPP and MPA from Lahore, Tariq Waheed Butt, brought out a huge procession on the roads which created further tension. The Rattan Cinema belonging to a mild person like Chaudhry Eid Muhammad was set on fire by the Alliance workers.

It was in such conditions that Mr. Bhutto reached Lahore so that he could ask Maulana Maudoodi to intervene and make the opposition agree to stopping the agitation. So far as I know Mr. Bhutto never consulted any of his Ministers about what he was intending to do. Had he asked us, we would have told him how belated his effort was, as a stage had been reached where even the PNA could not call off the agitation even if it wanted to.

At 6 p.m. that day, Brig. Bashir, dressed in mufti, arrived at 5 – A, Zulfikar Park, Ichhra, Lahore. That was the residence of Maulana Maudoodi, simple and neat. His son, Syed Muhammad Farooq Maudoodi, was just like an ADC to him. Meeting the Brigadier, he told him that Mr. Bhutto should be there precisely at 9 p.m.

At 8 – 30 p.m. the I.G. and D.I.G. of Punjab Police showed up. They wanted to inspect the room where the meeting was to take place. It was to see the arrangements keeping the security aspects in view. However, Farooq refused Permission saying that security was their responsibility, and hence they should not meddle. They went away only to turn up ten minutes later. This time they came to say that since Rao Rashid would be arriving earlier, he should kindly be made comfortable.

It was at twenty minutes to nine that Rao Rashid reached there, together with Pir Ashraf. They were offered seats in the verandah outside Maulana's room. Farooq Maudoodi was a hot – blooded young man. Even otherwise he was all for PNA those days. He had a tiff with Pir Ashraf with the result that the latter thought it better to go away.

Exactly at two minutes past nine, Mr. Bhutto arrived at Maulana's residence. He had his Military Secretary, Gen. Imtiaz, with him, as also a doctor. Farooq moved forward to receive them. Rao Rashid introduced him to Mr. Bhutto.

"What are you studying?" asked Mr. Bhuttto.

"Nothing," said Farooq.

“Doing some business?” Mr. Bhutto asked again.

“No, I am neither studying nor doing any business,” replied Farooq, rather roughly. “The entire nation is involved in protest meetings and processions, I’m doing the same. Everyone’s demanding your resignation, I also want the same. When are you resigning?”

That kind of reception must have made Mr. Bhutto boil inside, but looking at the situation he controlled his anger. He was still thinking what to say next when Farooq let off another one. “Any way,” he said, “What would you talk to me when you have come to talk to an extremely noble person. Come. I’ll take you to him.”

Maulana was unwell those days. Besides running temperature, he had pain in his joints. Mr. Bhutto went and sat in his drawing room. Five minutes later Maulana walked in. Mr. Bhutto stood up and shook him by the hand most respectfully. He then enquired, about his health.

After initial formalities, both of them sat down, Farooq moving over to the adjacent room. Now both were left to themselves but their voices could be heard in the next room. A servant went in and presented a cold drink. Mr. Bhutto picked up the glass, had a sip and put it down. Twenty minutes later tea was brought in together with some eatables. However, Mr. Bhutto remained engrossed in talking and did not eat anything. Farooq was listening to the talk.

“I am prepared to sign a blank paper,” Mr. Bhutto was saying,” I’ll accept what you deem proper to write on it.”

“I had presented some demands to you two months earlier,” Maulana said, “Had you accepted those at the time your power could have been saved, but you wasted the opportunity. Today workers of the People’s Party have been brought on the roads for armed clashes with the public; civil war – like conditions are prevailing in the country. Now there’s only one way out – you should resign immediately, or else your life will be in danger. I promise to save your life if you submit your resignation.”

Hearing that, Mr. Bhutto launched upon a long speech covering the international situation, the role of America, and the delicate position along the borders. In that 55 minutes meeting. This speech consumed 45 minutes. During this Maulana Maudoodi spoke for hardly ten minutes. His last sentences were the same as in the beginning. In reply all that Bhutto said was, “Maulana, I have all the respect for you, I can accept anything that you say, but I cannot resign.”

When the meeting ended, Maulana Maudoodi came out of the room with Mr. Bhutto, reached him to his car, and went inside. At the turn of the road out side a crowed had gathered. However, secret the meeting, yet it was not all that unimportant that people would not come to know of it. Maulana had earlier sent a

word through Farooq to the people gathered outside saying that since Mr. Bhutto was his guest no slogans should be raised against him. There also was danger that the exuberant workers of Islami Jamaat – I – Tulaba, whoes central office happened to be only a few peaces away in the same street, might create some unplesantness. An old and regular office holder of the Jamaat. Abdul Waheed Khan, had been deputed to disperse the crowed and not to allow anyone to be there in the street. Mr. Bhutto's commandos, in plain clothes, were also going up and down. It was beyond Maulana Maudoodi's graceful nature and propriety to allow any disrespect to a guest of his. He made sure that nothing untoward happened.

Mr. Bhutto's meeting with Maulana Maudoodi had hardly got underway when news spread about it all over Lahore. Within 15 minutes at least 40 newsmen were at the residence of Maulana. He read out only a brief statement written in the hand of his son, Farooq. All it said was that Maulana had advised Mr. Bhutto to resign. In reply to the spate of questions which followed, all that Maulana said was: "I wish to be excused; my health does not permit me to answer your questions.

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CHAPTER 21

AND ………THE LINE WENT DEAD

The death toll in the torrential rains at Karachi on Sunday, 3 July, had risen to about 350. Life was paralysed. The army jawans who, at the orders of their Generals, had been targetting their guns at the people only a few earlier were now busy in providing relief to all and Sunday, carrying them and their belongings to safety. All hands were raised in prayers for them.

On the other hand, here in Islamabad, the brains engaged in determining the fate of the country seemed to have been overtaken by a snowfall, freezing their powers of comprehension.

Late in the afternoon, Mufti Mahmud rang up Prime Minister Bhutto to inform that he was coming with his team for a high level conference and hence he should also summon his aides. Mr. Bhutto asked him to come after dinner.

It was ten in the evening that Pirzada and myself, together with Mr. Bhutto, were sitting across the table with Mufti Mahmud and his companions, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan and Prof. Ghafoor.

Starting the talks, Mufti Mahmud said that the shape in which the draft had been presented was not acceptable to the PNA's Central Council. He appeared fairly dejected.

Interjecting, Prof. Ghafoor offered apologies. "We are in a tight corner," he said, "it seems that some of those in our ranks have connections with Army Generals; it is they who threaten Martial Law."

"You should strengthen our hands," said Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, "we have brought some technical points with us. These don't need to be added to the accord but are necessary to make it appear more plausible."

Prof. Ghafoor spoke up again. "Some of our colleagues ask as what is the constitutional status of the Implementation Council. They also condemn us for accepting you as Chairman of the council."

Getting support from his team, Mufti Mahmud adjusted his posture and sat more confidently. "All that you should do is to add an interim clause in the Constitutional safeguard to the Implementation Council."

"Give me the points which you have brought," said Prime Minister Bhutto," I'll first consult my colleagues and let you know what they think about it."

Taking a few papers, and reading over the points to us, Mr. Bhutto asked for our opinion. “There’s nothing new in these points,” I said,” nor would they add anything to the clauses of the accord. These are only some points of a technical nature and I think we should accept them so that we can sign the accord today and not allow any deadlock.”

The Prime Minister now looked towards Hafeez. “Sir” he said, “there’s no need of this. Let them bend; they claim contacts with the Generals …. There’s nothing of the sort….. the Generals are with you. The fact is that their own bubble has burst, that’s why they are talking like this…. Let them talk.”

When I insisted once again that the accord should be signed the same day, the Prime Minister spoke up. “Why do you worry, friend,” he said, “we’ll accept all this, but where’s the hurry! If we accept straightaway they’ll think we are on a weak footing. They should wait for a while.”

Hearing, this, I felt the room the room temperature failing below freezing point! I kept silent.

Returning to the Cabinet Room and resuming his seat, the Prime Minister addressed Mufti Mahmud. “We need some further consultations,” he said, “we can only say something after that.”

Hearing this, Mufti Mahmud, Nawabzada Nasurllah Khan and Prof. Ghafoor moved uneasily in their seats. Completely dejected, they shook hands and moved out.

This was our last meeting with the PNA’s negotiating team. After that, around midnight, the Prime Minister himself briefed the newsmen in the auditorium of PM House. ”These will be no change now in the agreed upon accord,” he said. “The Alliance has brought up new issues and involved the nation in problems. I can only go to a certain limit to resolve matters. The PNA’s negotiating team had accepted the accord. Now I’ll only give my response to them after a Cabinet meeting.”

I was feeling feverish when I reached home at 12 – 30 that night. Soon after I got a call from Raja Abdul Aziz Bhatti, MNA from Gujar Khan, enquiring as to what turn the negotiation had taken. My answer was brief: We’ll see dawn if we survive tonight!” When he probed further I told him that conditions were not satisfactory and there could be a take – over any time.

The same night, around one a.m. the American Ambassador Arther W. Hemmil, met the Prime Minister again. This was after we had left. It is still a secret as to what transpired between the two during this meeting. However, it is said that the American Ambassador gave indications of a take – over which was

rejected by Mr. Bhutto off – hand, considering it to be yet another threat from the American side, although in his heart of heart, he also felt it coming.

On 4 July, the Cabinet met in the evening during which the points put forward by the Alliance came under discussion. I again submitted arguments in favour of an early signing of the accord. Gen. Zia – ul – Haq was also present. Mr. Bhutto sat composed.

After the meeting ended, a few of us stood talking outside the Cabinet Room. Mr. Bhutto had moved to his room accompanied by Gen. Zia – ul – Haq. He stayed with him for about ten minutes during which Mr. Bhutto probably talked to him with reference to what had been said by the American Ambassador.

As he emerged from the room. There was a change on the face of Gen. Zia – ul – Haq. He appeared to be in a hurry. It was a habit with him to hold the other person's wrist before a long and warm handshake, but that day it appeared that he wanted to get rid of the hand he was shaking; he just allowed the fingers to touch the other man's palm and disappeared. Totally surprised, I could feel that something was in the offing.

When Mir Afzal Khan and I left to go home. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi was still in the PM House.

Being rather upset, I told the telephone operator that I was not feeling well and would be going to sleep. I instructed him not to wake me up unless there was some urgent call.

Around nine that night the Prime Minister's ADC rang up at which the operator told him that I was not feeling well and had gone to sleep. He offered to arouse me if necessary. When the ADC conveyed this to the Prime Minister he told him not to wake me up.

At twenty past nine, Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi was preparing to get into bed at the Sindh House when the Prime Minister rang him up. He appeared in a happy mood. "What's the programme?" he asked. Nothing; Sir," said Jatoi. "Then come over, "said Mr. Bhutto.

Within ten minutes Jatoi was at the PM House. The ADC told him that the Prime Minister was going to address a Press conference. Journalists and photographers were already around. Bhutto was sitting in the lawn with Hafeez Pirzada. Jatoi went and joined them.

Mr. Bhutto asked his ADC to put him through to Khar but despite all efforts he could not be traced.

At fifteen minutes past ten, when Mumtaz Bhutto also arrived at the PM House, the Prime Minister spoke up, “Today I want to sign the accord and finish the game,” he said.

“But, Sir,” said Hafeez in surprise, “only yesterday we decided not to hurry through.”

“Hafeez, shut up, “was the curt retort from Bhutto, “Enough is enough. I want to finish it.”

Hafeez continued “Sir, what will happen then. “He said, “these people are unreliable, they might raise another issue. We have taken the wind out of their sails; their agitation has petered out, people are sick and tired of them, they cannot restart before three or four months. If they come out again, there is possibility of Martial Law, but we will have enough time to level the score with them.”

Above are the exact words used by Hafeez Pirzada to deter Mr. Bhutto from signing the accord. The style in which he advanced his arguments are also worthy of note and it is only he who can explain why he was so vociferous in preventing Mr. Bhutto from taking the step. All this transpired in my absence and it is Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi who remembered all the unforgettable words uttered by Hafeez and conveyed them to me.

After this oration by Hafeez Mr. Bhutto asked Jatoi about his opinion. Disagreeing with Hafeez, he said, “If there is a break in the negotiations, PNA will again organise its ranks and bring the people out on the streets. Hafeez thinks M<artial Law will take three or four months to come but I think it won’t take more than three or four weeks.”

In the end, when Mr. Bhutto turned to Mumtaz, he also expressed agreement with Jatoi. At this Bhutto gave his verdict. I’ll sign the accord with PNA tomorrow,” he said, “Tonight I am announcing this in the Press conference.”

The Press conference started at 11 – 30 p.m. and continued for one hour. During this Mr. Bhutto announced that he had decided to sign the accord and the agreement would be finalised the next morning. He added, “the negotiating team of the Alliance had brought another the points and were themselves ashamed that they were stirring up fresh issues. They said they were helpless. They may be helpless, but I am not. As such I will sign the accord tomorrow.”

Jatoi, Mumtaz and Pirzada left the PM House around 1 – 30 a.m. and till then they did not see any thanks or troops on the roads. The army movement started precisely at thirty minutes past two. They had probably been waiting for all the unconcerned persons to leave the Prime Minister’s House. Bhutto was probably awake when Mumtaz Bhutto rang him up at 2 – 30 to inform that he had

seen some troops moving on the roads. Soon Noora noticed that the police guard stationed at PM House had disappeared. He immediately ran to inform Mr. Bhutto. He picked up the phone and asked the operator to put him through to Maj. Gen. Imtiaz. The phone was working till then. A little while later the operator told Mr. Bhutto that the reply he got from Gen. Imtiaz's residence is that he has already left for GHQ. "Then put me through to Gen. Zia – ul – Haq," ordered Mr. Bhutto. It was the same reply from Army House –" Gen. Zia – ul – Haq is in the GHQ."

Mr. Bhutto understood what was going on. He asked the operator to get Gen. Zia – ul – Haq in GHQ.

After a long wait, Gen. Zia – ul – Haq attended the call. "What's happening?" asked Mr. Bhutto, "I hear the army is on the move, is that correct?"

"What you're heard is correct, Sir, "answered Gen. Zia – ul – Haq, most calmly, "I'm sorry there was no other way out put this."

Taking some time to explain the situation, Gen. Zia – ul – Haq asked Mr. Bhutto, "Sir, where would you like to go, Muree, Larkhana or Karachi?"

"Muree," said Bhutto. He then enquired about his family.

"Begum Sahib can go with you," he said, "but the children will go to Larkhana," said Mr. Bhutto.

"Right, Sir," said Gen. Zia – ul – Haq, you'll be conveyed to Muree in the morning after breakfast." After that he rang off.

The last telephone call that Mr. Bhutto received that night was from Malik Ghulam Mustafa Khar whom he had probably come to know about the take over through his own sources and was calling from some unknown location in the city. He had hardly said, "Sir, I've heard ……"when the telephone line went dead.

The Night of the Generals had commenced!

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